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# The Music of James Reese Europe For Vernon and Irene Castle

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THE MUSIC OF JAMES REESE EUROPE FOR VERNON AND IRENE CASTLE

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

James Reese Europe (1881-1919) was one of the leading African American musicians of the first two decades of the twentieth century. He was renowned as a conductor of theater and dance orchestras, a composer of syncopated dance music and popular song, and an advocate for improved opportunities and remuneration for African American professional musicians in New York. From late 1913 until mid-1915, Europe was musical director for the popular exhibition dance team of Vernon (1887-1918) and Irene (1893-1969) Castle. During their brief career, the Castles were instrumental in changing the sordid image of social dancing during America's "dance craze" of the early twentieth century to that of a healthy, sophisticated, and wholesome pastime. From this collaboration came several significant firsts that challenged the practice of strict racial segregation and unequal opportunity for African Americans in the United States. Among these historic firsts were a set of recording sessions and subsequent record releases by Victor, the first such by an African American ensemble. Europe composed eleven original dance compositions for the Castles, as a tool for highlighting their signature dances. These compositions were published as solo piano sheet music, and as stock arrangements for flexible orchestra and wind band instrumentation. Three were also recorded as part of the Victor recording sessions. This study includes: the historical background of the

Europe/Castle collaboration; analysis and review of the eleven Castle-branded dance composition; a discussion of the Victor recording sessions; a discussion of the connections between the music and the dances for which they were composed. A critical edition of a wind band arrangement of *Castle House Rag* accompanies this study.



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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

From late 1913 through mid-1915, two prominent forces in American popular entertainment - an influential African American musician, and an iconic Anglo-American exhibition dance team - established an artistic and entrepreneurial collaboration that flew in the face of the racially segregated United States of the early twentieth century. James Reese Europe was among the most significant African American musicians of this period. Born into a musical family in Mobile, AL, Europe was a classically trained violinist and pianist. He developed as a popular musician, composer, and conductor in turn-of-the-century New York. Cutting his professional teeth performing in the cabarets of the “Tenderloin” district, Europe became a major force in the pre-World War I African American musical theater. He was instrumental in the creation of the Clef Club, a pioneering New York labor organization for African American professional musicians. Under Europe’s direction, the Clef Club Symphony Orchestra, and later the Tempo Club Symphony Orchestra, broke new ground in the creation of a unique African American symphonic voice. Europe’s Society Orchestra was an all-black dance orchestra of extraordinary musicality, technical skill, and professional decorum. They were considered among the nation’s finest ragtime and syncopated dance orchestras and were first-call performers for the private entertainment and social events of the New York’s ultra-wealthy and elite high society, known as “the 400.” In 1913 Europe first came in

contact with the most popular white exhibition dance team of the time, British-born Vernon Castle and his American wife Irene Castle.

Europe and the Castles both came into national prominence during a period marked by the explosion of interest in “modern” social dancing, known as America’s “Dance Craze.” From this era were born the so-called animal dances, with names like the bunny hug, turkey trot, snake wiggle, and grizzly bear. These physically challenging and sexually suggestive dances, the African-American-influenced syncopated music that accompanied them, and the unrestricted dance venues frequented by unchaperoned men and women, drew the ire and disapproval of conservative commentators, religious leaders, medical professionals, and the nation’s social elite. The clean-cut Castles, with their simple, non-suggestive, and socially acceptable dances, helped to change the negative image of popular dancing to that of a stylish, sophisticated, and healthful pastime in which anyone and everyone could participate.

In late 1913, Europe became musical director for the Castles, and Europe’s Society Orchestra became the Castle’s exclusive dance orchestra. Performing with Europe, an artist with an already established national reputation, gave the Castle’s act additional exclusivity and cachet. And working with the white Castles opened doors for Europe and his African American musicians that had previously been closed to black performers. Several historic firsts came from this brief artistic and entrepreneurial collaboration, including: the first commercial recordings by an African American ensemble; the first performance by non-union African American musicians in unionized New York theaters; the first appearance of African American and white artists

performing together for a predominantly white audience; and a national tour featuring an ethnically mixed touring company.

Europe composed a body of eleven Castle-branded dance compositions. They include fox trots, one-steps, waltzes, and South American-inspired dance numbers. Seven of the eleven were co-written by Europe associate Ford Dabney. The publishing firm Joseph W. Stern published ten selections in 1914; the American office of Italian publisher Ricordi published the eleventh, which was arranged by J. Louis von der Mehden, Jr., in 1915. Three of these compositions were recorded in February 1914 as part of a historic set of three 1913-1914 recording sessions by “Europe’s Society Orchestra” for Victor Records. These were the first commercial recordings by an African American ensemble. To meet the demand for the newest dance music, a number of these compositions, including the three recorded selections, were published in arrangements for flexible orchestra and wind band instrumentations. This provided professional and amateur ensembles with the very latest popular music, in arrangements performable by a variety of instrumental configurations.

#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to examine the eleven syncopated dance compositions composed by James Reese Europe specifically for the exhibition dance team of Vernon and Irene Castle. Along with historical background material, this study will present: structural analysis of the Europe/Castle compositions; a discussion of the three recorded selections; descriptions of the dances for which the music was composed; and a critical edition of the wind band arrangement of *Castle House Rag*.

## NEED FOR STUDY

Both Europe and the Castles have received considerable scholarly attention as significant historical figures, and their collaboration is well documented. But there does not appear to be any specific attention given to the eleven Europe/Castle dance compositions as a single body of work. *Castle House Rag*, a single work from this period, has been singled out for special consideration in a number of books and articles on ragtime, with no mention of its origins, or its connection to ten other dance compositions. Much has been written on the “dance craze” of the 1910s, and the dances that developed from that time. However, the connection between the dancing style of Vernon and Irene Castle and Europe’s Castle-branded music calls for a very specific examination each in the light of the other. There is no single document that combines a historical overview of the Europe/Castle collaboration with a thorough examination of the original music and dance creations that were the artistic fruits of their combined efforts.

All of the Europe/Castle compositions were published as solo piano sheet music. As previously stated, a number were published as stock arrangements for orchestra and wind band of flexible instrumentation. Five of these arrangements held by the Library of Congress (LOC) were digitized and uploaded to their website as part of an online feature on African American bands, and band stocks composed by African American composers from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These arrangements are all in the public domain, and may be downloaded for performance. However, they present certain challenges in their original version for the contemporary performer.

Directions for form and format in the published stock arrangements of this era tend to be confusing. Publishers utilized ambiguous formats and markings, such as

repeated strains with as many as three different endings, and *D.C. al Fine* and *del segno* directions without clear destinations. To further complicate matters, not all parts within any given arrangement utilize the same format and repeat schemes, and publishers seldom included measure numbers or systems of rehearsal numbers/letters.

Printed articulations are limited to horizontal and vertical accents, and are frequently deployed interchangeably from part to part. Slurs are not always applied to every part, even in unisons and *tutti* rhythmic figures. Dynamics are not applied consistently. Certain dynamic directions, like a dynamic of *ff* followed by *crescendo* into a termination of *fz*, appear ambiguous if not somewhat incongruous. The common publishing practice of printing multiple instrumental parts on a single piece of music, coupled with the use of small type and paper stock sizes, created individual parts that are difficult to read and often lacking detailed performance instruction. None of these arrangements were published with full scores, further challenging contemporary performance. While these publishing choices were designed for lower production costs and higher profits for the publisher, they produced arrangements that are needlessly confusing for the musician. Additionally, the stock wind band arrangements from this period utilize outmoded instrumentations, often calling for instruments that are no longer in common usage like horns and cornets in E-flat, alto and tenor horns, and B-flat treble clef parts for instruments that would normally read in bass clef.

For the lecture recital connected to this study, the author performed the entire LOC holding of Europe orchestra arrangements from the period of the Europe/Castle collaboration, which includes five Europe/Castle compositions and an unrelated march. The lack of full scores meant learning the arrangements involved consulting individual

parts, and notating cues on the piano parts, which serve as conductor's guides. Many individual parts include material not indicated in the piano scores. In rehearsal, the confusing form and format directions made these well-written and very performable arrangements tricky for the performers. The arrangements required a fairly detailed explanation of form, format, and iconography. Inevitably, some member of the orchestra would miss a repeat, misinterpret an ending, or fail to locate a *del segno* icon. This used up precious rehearsal time that could have been better spent on the music itself. Even moments before the recital performance, the orchestra requested the author give one final review of the forms of all six selections.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While Europe was recognized from his own time forward as a significant figure in the development of jazz, before 1987 any scholarship pertaining to his work was mostly limited to dictionary and encyclopedia entries, and mentions in African American histories, jazz histories, books on ragtime, and biographies and autobiographies of Europe's contemporaries. Mention is made in these writings of his collaboration with the Castles, however, without any significant detail. Much more recognition is given to Europe's service during World War One with the 369<sup>th</sup> "Hellfighter's" Band, and his impressive war record, than his pre-war career. In general most coverage of Europe was cursory, with very little detail of his life, work, or accomplishments.

Europe's contemporaries and colleagues remember him as a significant figure in the black entertainment scene in turn-of-the-century New York.<sup>1</sup> He has been called "the

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<sup>1</sup> James Weldon Johnson. *Black Manhattan*. (New York: Atheneum, 1969).



most important transitional figure in the pre-history of jazz on the East coast,”<sup>2</sup> and an important influence in the evolving New York jazz sound. Europe is also viewed as an important figure in the transitional period between ragtime and jazz. He spoke critically of the improvisatory nature of certain contemporaneous African American musical expression, his own opposition to it, and the need for blacks to develop their own music. This commentary by Europe was part of an article and interview with Europe published in the April 26, 1919 *Literary Digest* entitled *A Negro Explains “Jazz.”*<sup>3</sup> A 1991 journal article entitled “James Reese Europe and the Prehistory of Jazz,” addresses the significance of Europe in the period of transition from ragtime to jazz.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to his musical contributions, James Reese Europe had a tremendous impact on the growing African American community that lived and worked in the Harlem neighborhood of Manhattan.<sup>5</sup> Europe’s efforts to improve working conditions and compensation for black musicians through Clef Club, and his work with the Castles were critical in raising the professional and cultural values of African American music and musicians. Europe is also lifted up as a foundational figure in America’s cultural acceptance of black music and dance.<sup>6</sup> In spite of his significance to popular music, social

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<sup>2</sup> Gunther Schuller. *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 249.

<sup>3</sup> Ron Welburn. “James Reese Europe And The Infancy Of Jazz Criticism.” *Black Music Research Journal* 7 (1987): 35-44.

<sup>4</sup> Reid Badger. “James Reese Europe and the Prehistory of Jazz.” *American Music* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1989), 48-67.

<sup>5</sup>Leonard Goines and Mikki Shephard. "James Reese Europe and his impact on the New York scene." *Black Music Research Bulletin* 10, no. 2 (September 1, 1988), 6-8.

dance, and African American music and entertainment, there was no single biographical monograph on Europe until 75 years after his death.<sup>7</sup>

Much the same can be said for the Castles. Nothing comprehensive was written on their lives, either separately or as a married couple and dance team, until a considerable time after they were long dead, and their importance to social dancing was long overlooked.<sup>8</sup> Vernon and Irene Castle themselves produced two books that speak on their career as an exhibition dance team and their take on the couples social dances that they helped to create and develop. *Modern Dancing* was written as a combination dance manual and promotional piece.<sup>9</sup> *Castles in the Air* is Irene Castle's rather anecdotal autobiography of her life and work with Vernon Castle.<sup>10</sup>

James Reese Europe, in addition to the eleven dance selections he composed for the Castles, composed a larger body of popular selections, which included "coon songs," songs for musical theater, dance selections, and songs for his 369<sup>th</sup> "Hellfighters" Band.<sup>11</sup> His *Castle House Rag* is considered an important syncopated dance selection from that era, and as a New York adaptation of the slower tempo traditional Midwest piano rag. As

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<sup>6</sup> David Gilbert. "Clef Club Inc.: James Reese Europe and New York's Musical Marketplace." *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, 24, no. 4 (December 2012), 433.

<sup>7</sup> Reid Badger. *A Life in Ragtime: A Biography of James Reese Europe*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.)

<sup>8</sup> Eve Golden. *Vernon and Irene Castle's Ragtime Revolution*. (Lexington KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2007.)

<sup>9</sup> Vernon and Irene Castle. *Modern Dancing*. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1914).

<sup>10</sup> Irene Castle. *Castles in the Air*. (New York: Doubleday, 1958).

<sup>11</sup> James Reese Europe. *The Music of James Reese Europe: Complete Published Works*. (New York: Edward B. Marks, 2012).

a songwriter, Europe is remembered for his efforts to eradicate the stereotype of black musicians as “menial entertainer(s).”<sup>12</sup> And while considered a ragtime composer of some talent, Europe may have been distracted from composing traditional ragtime selections by the attraction of more lucrative popular dance forms, including those he composed for the Castles.<sup>13</sup>

Publisher Joseph W. Stern’s signed Europe to a mutually lucrative contract to publish the Europe/Castle compositions and subsequent arrangements, considered “Stern’s biggest coup of 1914.” It represents the single strongest composer/publisher relationship of the “dance craze” era.<sup>14</sup> The stock arrangements for band and dance orchestra published by Stern and Ricordi, with whom Europe was concurrently contracted, were typical of the band and orchestral ragtime arrangements that were being published and recorded during the first two decades of the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> The musical forms Europe utilized for these dance compositions were also typical of the rags and syncopated music of the time; all were based on the multiple strains and key relationships derived from marches.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> William J. Schafer and Johannes Riedel. *The Art of Ragtime: Form and Meaning of an Original Black American Art* (Baton Rouge, LA: LSU Press, 1973) 21.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>14</sup> David A. Jason and Gene Jones. *That American Rag: The Story of Ragtime from Coast to Coast*. (New York: Schirmer, 2000), 282.

<sup>15</sup> Thornton Hagert. “Band and Orchestral Ragtime.” *Ragtime: Its History, Composers, and Music*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1985.)

<sup>16</sup> Roland Nadeau. “The Grace and Beauty of Classic Rags: Structural Elements in a Distinct Musical Style.” *Ragtime: Its History, Composers, and Music*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1985), 218.

The 1913-1914 recordings produced by Europe's Society Orchestra for the Victor Record Company marked the first commercial recordings by an African American ensemble. Victor released a total of eight selections from the three sessions, three of which were Europe/Castle dance selections.<sup>17</sup> Victor maintained scrupulous records of all the recordings they produced and distributed, so very exact data on the three Europe's Society Orchestra sessions remains available.<sup>18</sup> Victor released the Europe's Society Orchestra recordings as a part of their Black Label series of recordings, the least prestigious of their four color-coded labels. Black Label releases were typically popular dance and any black artists.<sup>19</sup> Several of the Europe/Castle dance compositions have very recently been recorded as a part of *Black Manhattan: Theater and Dance Music of James Reese Europe, Will Marion Cook, and Members of the Legendary Clef Club*, a 2003 recording by Rick Benjamin and The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra.<sup>20</sup>

Because Europe composed dance music for the Castles, an appreciation for the "dance craze" of the 1910s, and the impact of the Castles on social dancing in early twentieth century America, is important to an understanding of the Europe/Castle

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<sup>17</sup>Tim Brooks. *Lost Sounds: Blacks and the Birth of the Recording Industry, 1890-1919*. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 267-292.

<sup>18</sup> *Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings*. <http://victor.library.ucsb.edu/index.php>. (accessed April 11, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> John R Bolig. *The Victor Discography: Green, Blue, and Purple Labels (1909-1927)*. (Wilmington: Mainspring Press, 2006).

<sup>20</sup> *Black Manhattan: Theater and Dance Music of James Reese Europe, Will Marion Cook, and Members of the Legendary Clef Club*. The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra, Rick Benjamin, Director. (New World Records 80661-2. CD. 2003).

music.<sup>21</sup> In addition to performing the standard popular dances of the times, the Castles created unique adaptations of these dances, along with several original signature dances, for which Europe composed original music.<sup>22</sup> Social dance in the early twentieth century also represented the emergence of a new, more independent, modern woman, who was exemplified in Irene Castle.<sup>23</sup> The cultural context of Vernon and Irene Castle as dancers and social icons also addresses certain significant historical dynamics of the era, including primitivism versus modernism, passion versus control, race, gender roles, and class.<sup>24</sup>

## DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

This study will be comprised of 6 chapters, four appendices, and a bibliography. Chapter 1 will consist of an introduction and background, a description of problem, a statement of purpose, a review of literature, and a plan for designs and procedures. Chapter 2 is a historical overview of the Europe/Castle collaboration. It includes biographical information on Europe and the Castles, highlights of their work together, and background on the “dance craze” of the early twentieth century. Chapter 3 includes information and analysis of the eleven Europe/Castle compositions. For the analysis, I

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<sup>21</sup> Mark Knowles. *The Wicked Waltz and Other Scandalous Dances: Outrage at Couples Dancing in the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009)76-81.

<sup>22</sup> Julie Malnig. *Dancing Till Dawn: A Century of Exhibition Ballroom Dancing*. (New York: New York University Press, 1992) 149-151.

<sup>23</sup> Julie Malnig. “Athena Meets Venus: Visions of Women in Social Dance in the Teens and Early 1920s.” *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Autumn, 1999), 34-62.

<sup>24</sup> Susan C. Cook. "Passionless Dancing And Passionate Reform: Respectability, Modernism, And The Social Dancing Of Irene And Vernon Castle." *The passion of music and dance: Body, gender, and sexuality*. (New York: Berg, 1998) 133-150.

utilized the methodology used by Roland Nadeau in his essay “The Grace and Beauty of Classic Rags: Structural Elements in a Distinct Musical Style” to identify elements of form in horizontal chart form.<sup>25</sup> This chapter also includes brief biographical sketches of: Ford Dabney, co-writer with Europe of seven of the eleven Europe/Castle compositions; J. Louis von der Mehden, arranger of the Europe/Castle composition *Congratulations Waltz*, and arranger of Europe/Castle stock arrangements published by Ricordi; and Tom Clark, the arranger of the wind band stock arrangement of *Castle House Rag*, for which the author has produced a critical edition for this study (Appendix C). Chapter 4 is a discussion of the Victor recording sessions, and the three Europe/Castle compositions recorded during the February 1914 session. Chapter 5 is a review of the dances performed by the Castles, for which Europe composed. This discussion includes a description of each dance, and, where available, a description of the Castle’s proprietary version, as provided by Vernon Castle in *Modern Dancing*. Chapter 6 includes conclusions and recommendations for further study. Appendix A is a chronology of significant events in the Europe/Castle collaboration. Appendix B is a discography and videography. Appendix C is photocopies of the first pages of the eleven Europe/Castle compositions.

Appendix D is a critical edition of the stock wind band arrangement of *Castle House Rag*, one of the better known of the Europe/Castle compositions. This edition addresses the inconsistencies, ambiguities, and outdated instrumentation of the original arrangement, and creates an edition more readily performable by contemporary wind bands. The author used Finale music writing software to create the score. From the

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<sup>25</sup> Ronald Nadeau. “The Grace and Style of Classic Rags: Structural Elements in a Distinct Musical Style”, 218.

existing wind band arrangement parts, the author rescored the arrangement for contemporary wind band instrumentation as follows:

TABLE 1.1 *CASTLE HOUSE RAG* CRITICAL EDITION SCORING

<u>Original Scoring</u>	<u>Critical Edition Scoring</u>
D-flat piccolo	Flute and piccolo in C
Oboe	Oboe
Bassoon	Bassoon
E-flat clarinet	E-flat clarinet
B-flat clarinets 1-3	B-flat clarinets 1-3
Soprano/Alto/Tenor/Baritone Saxophones	Soprano/Alto/Tenor/Baritone Saxophones
E-flat cornet	Eliminated
Solo cornet/Cornets 1-3	B-flat trumpets 1-3
E-flat horns 1-4	F horns 1-4
B-flat tenors	Eliminated
Baritone in bass clef	Euphonium
Baritone in treble clef	Eliminated
Tuba	Tuba
B-flat basses (treble clef)	Bass clarinet
Drums (on one part)	Separate parts for snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, bells and accessories

Articulation modifications included: horizontal accents indicate notes to be accented at the full written value; vertical accents indicate notes to be performed accented at half the

written value; staccato articulation is used only on a succession of eighth notes (subdivision), to indicate value, method of articulation, and requirement for that rhythm to stand out distinctly from dotted-eighth-and-sixteenth-note rhythms. The dynamic profile of the original arrangement is maintained, adjusting as necessary to maintain the original *crescendo/ decrescendo* indications within the overall context.



## CHAPTER 2

### EUROPE AND THE CASTLES: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

James Reese Europe was born in February 22, 1880, in Mobile, AL, the son of a former slave father and a freeborn mother, the third of four children. Music appears to have played a central role in the Europe family life. His mother, Lorraine, played piano and provide Europe and his siblings with their initial music training. His father, Henry, a federal civil servant and Baptist clergyman, was a self-taught musician and composer of Christian hymns. Europe, his brother John, and youngest sister Mary, all eventually went on to make their living as musicians, with John and Mary achieving notoriety as pianists.

Henry Europe relocated his family to Washington DC in 1889 in order to take a position with the National Postal Service, an opportunity now being afforded by the new Republican administration of President Harrison.<sup>26</sup> The Europe's home was at 318 B Street South East, on the same block as Marine Band director John Philip Sousa.<sup>27</sup> James studied violin and piano under assistant Enrico Hurlei, director of the Marine Band, and composition under Hans Hanke, a former member of the Leipzig Conservatory. He very

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<sup>26</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 267.

<sup>27</sup> Europe considered the iconic Sousa a musical hero, and Marine Band leader's image must surely have loomed large before this young, ambitious musician. Europe was a life-long attender of Sousa performances. *Hey! There!*, Europe's last one-step march, may have been composed as homage to "The March King" from the man who would soon be called "The King of Jazz."

quickly gained a reputation as a performer in local recitals, and taking prizes in local composition contests.<sup>28</sup>

A few short years after leaving the Postal Service to begin pursue a career in real estate, Henry Europe died in June of 1899. His untimely death placed the Europe family in a tenuous situation, with neither mother Lorraine nor any of her youngest three children living at home able to provide substantial financial support for the family. At the same time, the Negro press was reporting growing opportunities for African Americans in New York's dynamic musical scene. Europe's older brother John relocated to New York in 1900, and managed to find steady work as a piano player at one of the city's most influential cabarets. By 1902, the Europe family found some financial stability with the relocation of an older Europe sister from Alabama, and James was free to follow his brother to New York in either late 1902 or early 1903, and pursue his own aspirations to become a professional musician in the new "Mecca for colored performers."<sup>29</sup> In addition to the thriving African American musical theater, and the growing demand for ragtime and other popular music forms, the press reports of opportunities for black musicians possessing "refined concert talent" to find work with "high class companies" must have been an additional enticement to the traditionally, trained James Europe.<sup>30</sup>

In reality, Europe relocated to a New York City, which, contrary to the African American press, was not necessarily overflowing in lucrative performing opportunities for black musicians. The white entertainment employment offices and the segregated

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<sup>28</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 25.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

musicians union did not service or engage black musicians, or permit black membership. Even the black entertainment community was not always welcoming to newly arriving black entertainers. This proved particularly challenging for Europe, who found his talents as a classical violinist not at all in demand. In the growing market for popular music, New York presented two options. The most accessible for young up-and-comers like Europe were the black-owned and frequented cabarets of Manhattan's midtown Tenderloin district. This entertainment and red-light district in the center of New York's Manhattan borough was home of the Tin Pan Alley music publishing houses, and such legendary establishments as Ike Hine's Professional Club, John B. Nail's infamous saloon, and Barron Wilkin's Little Savoy where James' brother John Europe was a regular performer.<sup>31</sup> These establishments featured many of the city's ragtime piano celebrities, like One-Leg Willie, Jack the Bear, and Charles "Lucky" Roberts. The second option were new whites-only "lobster palaces" around Times Square, which catered to a young, well-healed clientele. The owners of these up-scale restaurants and night clubs would allow their African American wait and kitchen staff to play ragtime for tips after they had completed their shifts.<sup>32</sup> Europe found work early on playing mandolin and piano in Tenderloin cabarets.

Europe was soon to pioneer a third performing opportunity: the private homes and social events of America's wealthy elite. In 1904, an acquaintance of Europe's from Washington, now employed by department store magnate John Wanamaker, recommended Europe to perform for a small Wanamaker family event. Jim Europe

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>32</sup> Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 435.

organized a string quartet for his introduction to New York's elite high society, known collectively as "the 400." Success with the Wanamaker's translated into bookings for small dance orchestras, playing restrained versions of ragtime and syncopated dance music of the time.<sup>33</sup> It was Europe's work for elite high society that would bring him in contact with Vernon and Irene Castle a decade later. 1904 also saw Europe's first, albeit weak, engagement as a conductor for the musical *A Trip to Africa*. The opening was a disaster, and was soundly panned by the critic. The orchestra was called "vile," and the novice conductor Europe derided for his inability to give cues quickly enough.<sup>34</sup>

In 1905 Europe became a founding member of Ernest Hogan's Memphis Students.<sup>35</sup> This was a twenty-member singing and dancing syncopated orchestra that musician James Weldon Johnson called "the first modern jazz band ever heard on the New York stage, and probably on any other stage."<sup>36</sup> Johnson would certainly have been referring to the Memphis Students star billing at Hammerstein's Victoria Theater on Broadway, which is considered the first public concert of syncopated music.<sup>37</sup> This was likely Europe's first professional experience with ensemble ragtime and syncopated music. The concept of an instrumental ensemble presenting programs that featured

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 268.

<sup>35</sup> In spite of the name, none of the members of the Memphis students hailed from Memphis, nor were any actually students. There were a number of touring groups with such names, attempting to capitalize on the fame of the Fisk Jubilee singers, the iconic student choir from Fisk University in Nashville, TN.

<sup>36</sup> James Weldon Johnson. *Black Manhattan*. (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 120.

<sup>37</sup> Leonard Goines and Mikki Shephard. "James Reese Europe and his impact on the New York scene." (*Black Music Research Bulletin* 10, no. 2, September 1, 1988), 6.

ensemble members singing and dancing was one that Europe utilized throughout his career as a conductor and bandleader.

In spite of his inauspicious beginnings in musical theater, Europe scored his first theatrical success in the Cole and Johnson production, *The Shoo-Fly Regiment*, featuring the Europe song, “On the Gay Lunetta.” His conducting and musical direction for the 1907 Smart Set Company production *The Black Politician* garnered very encouraging reviews for Europe as both a conductor and a composer.<sup>38</sup> He worked with the major figures of the black theater, including Will Marion Cook, Burt Williams, George Walker, Bob Cole, and J. Rosamond Johnson. Europe was a founding member, along with the aforementioned individuals, of The Frogs Club, a society of New York black theater professionals, in 1908. He served as the organizations first librarian, and led the efforts to build archival collections for a future black theatrical library that would be housed at the club’s West 132<sup>nd</sup> Street clubhouse. The name Frogs came from characters in Aristophanes and Aesop, symbolizing responsibility and dignity.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, Europe and other black bandleaders had for some time been booking small ensembles for the private social entertainment of the wealthy elite.

By 1910 the popular black musical productions that had enjoyed a healthy white audience on Broadway, mostly a holdover of blackface minstrelsy from the nineteenth century, were increasingly exiled to the Harlem district of New York, and a circuit of black theaters in other urban areas. Comic actor Bert Williams and a scant few other black artists were able to continue working in the “white entertainment system;” black

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<sup>38</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 268.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

entertainers almost exclusively entertained blacks.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, there was a new demand for black musicians and ensembles to performing the instrumental ragtime and syncopated dance music of the era in a growing number of cabarets dance halls. The addictively danceable rhythms of black ragtime music and dance were now becoming both acceptable and desirable to a new white audience seeking entertainment outside of the home. Yet even as blacks are being credited as originators of this music and dance, black musicians continued to be stymied in their attempts to find employment in New York's more lucrative venues. Blacks were not permitted membership in the American Federation of Musicians local, and none of the black artist labor collectives like the New Amsterdam Musical Association, or theatrical support groups like the Colored Vaudeville Benevolent Association and the Frogs, were able to support black musicians in securing popular music work.<sup>41</sup>

In April of 1910, a cadre of black musicians who traditionally gathered at the Marshall Hotel on 53<sup>rd</sup> Street to trade information and wait for gig calls formed a new black musicians labor organization called The Clef Club of the City of New York. James Reese Europe was elected as the organization's first president. The preamble to the Club's constitution speaks of racial uplift, improved musicianship, and the promotion of fellowship among members.<sup>42</sup> The organization's more practical goal was to further the interests of professional black instrumentalists, vocalists, and dancers in this new and burgeoning market, by seeking out regular work in the best venues for pay comparable to

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<sup>40</sup> Goines and Shepherd. "James Reese Europe and His Impact on the New York Scene," 6.

<sup>41</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 53.

<sup>42</sup> Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 442.

that of white musicians. Within the first year of its establishment, Clef Club musicians would be performing dance music regularly for the likes of the Astor's, Gould's, Vanderbilt's, and Cabot's.<sup>43</sup>

To draw public attention to the organization, Europe organized a Clef Club Symphony Orchestra. This 125-member orchestra, comprised of every Clef Club member musicians, utilized a singularly unique instrumentation.<sup>44</sup> The orchestra showcased to New York's music hiring community the large and excellent pool of quality African American musicians available to them.<sup>45</sup> The orchestra's premier performance was at a May 27, 1910 gala benefit at the Manhattan Casino. A second Clef Club Symphony entertainment followed in September 1910, a third in May 1911. And in May of 1912, the Symphony gave a benefit concert for the Music Settlement School for Colored People, an organization close to Europe's heart, at Carnegie Hall. This very likely was the first concerts of its kind in the United States: an all-African American ensemble, performing the music of African Americans, for a standing-room-only mixed race audience, in America's premier concert hall.<sup>46</sup> Although these performances were generally well received, much of the criticism by the white New York of the Clef Club Symphony Orchestra performances focused on the lack of music from the European art music tradition. Europe responded by pointing out that what the Clef Club Symphony

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 437.

<sup>44</sup> 47 mandolins and bandores; 27 harp guitars; 11 banjos; 8 violins; one saxophone; one tuba; 13 celli; 2 clarinets; 2 baritone horns; 8 trombones; 7 cornets; one timpanist; 5 trap drummers; 2 contrabasses; 10 pianos.

<sup>45</sup> Olly Wilson. "The Black-American Composer and the Orchestra of the Twentieth Century." *The Black Perspective in Music* 14, no.1 (Winter 1986), 276-27.

<sup>46</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 67.

Orchestra represented was a distinctly African American orchestral sound, based on instrumental choices that are uniquely African American, and a harmonic and compositional voice that is also peculiar to African Americans.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, Europe met his goal of creating more public awareness of, and demand, for Clef Club musicians, as demonstrated by an increase in bookings for Clef Club musicians and ensembles, and for vastly improved wages and benefits.<sup>48</sup> While Clef Club Symphony performances were not the singular agent for bringing African American music to cultural legitimacy, they were important events in the transition of African American music “from a marginalized form of entertainment into a central symbol of modern American culture at home and abroad.”<sup>49</sup>

1913 would be a watershed year for James Reese Europe, both personally and professionally. On January 5, 1913, he married Willie Angrom Starke, a widow of some social standing in New York’s black community.<sup>50</sup> The Clef Club Symphony performed a second Carnegie Hall in February, and a ten-day tour through Philadelphia, Washington DC, and Tidewater Virginia in the fall. Europe was also leading the Clef Club Symphony Orchestra on a growing number of dance and entertainment jobs. His own Europe’s

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<sup>47</sup> Olly Wilson. “The Black-American Composer and the Orchestra of the Twentieth Century,” 28.

<sup>48</sup> Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 437.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 432.

<sup>50</sup> Although the Europes remained married for the remainder of his life, James did maintain a long-term relationship with Bessie Simms (1889-1931), a dancer in the cast of Cole and Johnson’s musical production *Red Moon*, for which Europe was the musical director. Simms is the mother of Europe’s only progeny, James Reese Europe, Jr., born in 1917. Presumably Willie and Europe’s family were aware of the long-standing liaison and the resultant child, although there was no public acknowledgment of either.



Society Orchestra, a casual ensemble made up on a rotational basis of the city's finest black musicians, became noted for its precise musicianship, extensive book of dance selections, and high level of professional appearance and decorum. By 1913 Europe and his ensembles were the first call dance orchestras for New York's elite, and he was about to become the first African American musician to record commercially. Because of his efforts, Clef Club musicians held a monopoly on private social entertainment, and on providing syncopated dance music to meet a rapidly increasing public demand. They had a virtual lock on every non-union venue in New York.<sup>51</sup>

Europe himself was developing a reputation as an accomplished instrumentalist, a noteworthy composer of popular music, a strong and determined labor organizer and booker, and a firm and demanding music director.<sup>52</sup> In turn-of-the-century New York, James Reese Europe seemed well suited to express the "spirit of rebellion" and cultural change that marked the mood of the era.<sup>53</sup> Ragtime and syncopated dance music were flourishing. As the last vestiges of minstrelsy were waning, a new black musical theater was waxing. The first inclinations of jazz and modern gospel were appearing. Tin Pan Alley was transforming American popular music. This period also saw cultural elements of American society, urban and rural, black and white, sacred and secular, all equally in play. The nation was breaking from Victorian traditions and entering modernity.<sup>54</sup> Europe

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>52</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 68

<sup>53</sup> Goines and Shepherd, "James Reese Europe and His Impact on the New York Scene," 5.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 6.

was able to “synthesize artistic moods and attitudes of the turn-of-the-century and point them in the direction of the jazz age of the 1920s.”<sup>55</sup>

Considering all of Europe’s many attributes, the strongest may well have been as a businessman. His flexibility, commercial “street sense,” and talent for being in the right place at the right time, made him able to marshal the market forces and opportunities converging around him to the ultimate advantage of himself and the black entertainers he booked.<sup>56</sup> It was at the height of Europe’s power that he came in contact with the hottest exhibition dance team of the era, Vernon and Irene Castle.

Vernon Castle was born William Vernon Blyth in Norwich, England in 1887. He graduated from Birmingham University in 1907 with a degree in engineering. That year Vernon accompanied his father to New York, along with his sister and her husband, both actors, who were returning to New York to begin rehearsals for a new Lew Fields theatrical production. Mr. Blyth returned to England after a week, but Vernon remained, taking on a small part in the production, *About Town*. Vernon quickly caught the show business bug. He adopted the last name Castle to distinguish himself from his actress sister, who maintained her maiden name. Vernon worked in five Broadway comic productions between 1907 and 1910, including *The Girl Behind the Counter*, *The Mimic World*, and 257 performances in the role of Souseberry Lushmore in *The Midnight Son*. Vernon was given a choreographed dance during the final act of *The Midnight Son*, leading to his new future as a dancer.<sup>57</sup> It was through performing on the stage that

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>57</sup> Eve Golden, *Vernon and Irene Castle’s Ragtime Revolution*, 17.

Vernon learned to dance. The uniquely acrobatic and eclectic dancing style he developed on Broadway, with its physical balance, timing, and precision, would come to serve him well as an exhibition ballroom dance.<sup>58</sup>

It was in 1910, the year of the founding of the Clef Club, that Vernon met Irene Foote, a 17-year-old doctor's daughter, in New Rochelle, NY. Vernon had rented a room in a theatrical boarding house in New Rochelle, the "forty-five minutes from Broadway" community much appreciated by George M. Cohen and his fellow Broadway artist for its "small town atmosphere, congenial friends, and much cleaner air than Manhattan."<sup>59</sup>

Known as an independent and impetuous girl, Irene had a lifelong love of dance and performing. Her imitation of Broadway star and fellow New Rochelle resident Bessie McCoy's theme song "The Yama-Yama Man," complete with costume, became an obligatory amateur entertainment for local clubs and societies.<sup>60</sup> Following a few seasons of Sunday afternoon courting, and a brief engagement, Vernon and Irene were married in May of 1911.

Vernon was performing his most successful comic role, "Zowie, the Monarch of Mystery" in a Lew Field's production called *The Henpecks*, when he and Irene wed. Irene joined the cast in August 1911, replacing a departing actress in a minor, three-line role. It was through this show that the Castles were initially exposed to one of the first of the new ragtime dances, which in a few short years would lift them to national notoriety. Featured in the production was singer Blossom Seeley, known as "The Queen of

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<sup>58</sup> Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn*, 24.

<sup>59</sup> Golden, *Vernon and Irene Castle's Ragtime Revolution*, 30.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 29

Syncopation.” In the show she introduced to New York the “Texas tommy,” one of the very early ragtime dances, which originated from San Francisco’s Barbary Coast.<sup>61</sup>

In 1912, Vernon Castle was invited to Paris by French producer Jacques Charles to perform one of his “Zowie, the Monarch of Mystery” skits from *The Henpecks* in the “Enfin un Revué” at the Olympic Theatre.<sup>62</sup> Charles agreed to include a small part in the revue for Irene. In early 1912, the Castles left for Paris, accompanied by Walter Ash, the Foote’s family servant.<sup>63</sup> When Vernon’s skit fell flat with the French audiences, Vernon and Irene created a couples act, consisting of singing “Alexander’s Ragtime Band,” and dancing a rough version of the Texas tommy that they attempted to reconstruct from memory, newspaper accounts, and photos sent to them by Irene’s mother.<sup>64</sup> Finding conditions at the theater review intolerable, the Castles quit to audition for the fashionable and exclusive Café de Paris supper club as a dance act. They quickly put together a ragtime-style dance routine, which included a watered-down version of the grizzly bear. Their grizzly bear interpretation was based on a description of the dance, since neither Vernon nor Irene had actually seen the dance performed. Although Irene

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<sup>61</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 79.

<sup>62</sup> Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn*, 24.

<sup>63</sup> A number of sources speak of Vernon and Irene’s closeness with Walter Ash as a possible reason for their acceptance of Europe and his black musicians. Ash proved a resourceful friend during their time in France, earning money for food and rent during a period of unemployment for the Castles. Although Ash was a highly valued member of her family, Irene frequently expressed surprisingly condescending regard for him. For example, in *Castles in the Air*, she refers to Ash’s mother having been born into slavery, “so (Walter Ash) was used to being a family retainer.” Because Ash was such a significant figure in the Castle story, his character was incorporated in the 1939 *biopic* “The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle” starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. In order to avoid a general boycott by Southern film exhibitors, the role of Ash was given to white actor Walter Brennen.

<sup>64</sup> Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn*, 24.

describes their first performance as “rotten, really,” it was overwhelmingly well received, and Vernon and Irene were offered a nightly table and meals at the club to simply come and dance. Irene recalls their early days as exhibition dancers in Paris and their grizzly bear knock-off:

If the American version was rough, ours was even rougher, full of acrobatic variations that I was in the air much more than I was on the ground. The French audience was so enthusiastic. They stomped their feet and clapped their hands and yelled “Bravo. They stood up at the end of the number and yelled out “greezly bahr” until we appeared again.<sup>65</sup>

Eventually, the tips they earned dancing at Café de Paris far exceeded their salary.<sup>66</sup>

Ironically, the Castle’s reputation for a more restrained and refined style of dance developed, in some degree, from this time in Paris. For that first Café de Paris performance, Irene had nothing formal to wear save her wedding gown. Because she was forced to pin up the train to avoid tripping, it restricted the size and character of the couple’s dance steps. Additionally, the dance floor was ridiculously small, described by Irene as, “like dancing in the aisle of a Pullman car.”<sup>67</sup> This style, so contrary to the more athletic and suggestive “animal dances” that were so popular and controversial in America, became the hallmark of the Castle’s style, and what ultimately set them apart from the myriad other exhibition dance teams that were working during that time.

Following a very successful season dancing in the cabarets and private soirees in Paris, Germany, and England, Vernon and Irene returned to America in May of 1912, encouraged by predictions that their modern dance style would enjoy equal success

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<sup>65</sup> Castle, *Castles in the Air*, 54-55.

<sup>66</sup> Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz*, 208.

<sup>67</sup> Castle, *Castles in the Air*, 54.

across the Atlantic. Based on a strong recommendation from their Paris employer, the Castles were able to secure a contract with Manhattan's Café de l'Opera. Audiences flocked to see them, and they quickly became New York celebrities. However, their initial reception and treatment in the homes of ultra-wealthy elite of America was not quite as glorious, and may shed a light on the Castle's openness to working with James Reese Europe and his African American musicians. After having been treated as respected artists and social peers in France, the Castles found themselves treated like hired help on their first American engagement, a fashionable soiree at the Long Island estate of the Chatfield-Smith's. In her book, *Castles in the Air*, Irene speaks of she and Vernon being sequestered in a clothes closet until the guests finished their dinner, at which time they were released to dance. Perhaps this subservient treatment gave the Castles some real empathy for the similar sort of treatment accorded African Americans similarly engaged, and encouraged them to be more appreciative of James Reese Europe's efforts to improve conditions and opportunities for black artists. Indeed, a firm stipulation in Europe's contracts was that he and his musicians were being employed only as musicians, and were at no time to be considered domestics or "help."<sup>68</sup>

It was during this time that the Castles developed their first signature dance, "The Castle Walk," a version of the one step. It became an immediate sensation.<sup>69</sup> The Castles also returned to the American musical stage in a show entitled *The Sunshine Girl*. They remained with the show through the spring of 1913, then made a brief return visit to France.

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<sup>68</sup> Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 437.

<sup>69</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 82.

Vernon and Irene returned in the late summer of 1913 to an America that had gone absolutely crazy for social dancing. This was the height of the period known as America's Dance Craze, a social phenomenon of the first few decades of the twentieth century. An article from the October 1913 *Current Opinion*, entitled "New Reflections on the Dancing Mania" reports:

People who have not danced in 20 years have been dancing, during the past summer, afternoons as well as evenings. Up-to-date restaurants provide a dancing floor so that patrons may lose no time while the waiter is changing plates. Cabaret artists are disappearing except as interludes while people recover their breaths for the following number. One wishes either to dance or to watch and criticize those who dance.<sup>70</sup>

New dance halls cropped up nationwide to accommodate the huge demand. New dances seemed to appear weekly, so much so that a one newspaper ran the headline, "Dancing Masters are in a Quandary Over What Bird or Beast to Imitate in Search of a New Dancing Sensation."<sup>71</sup>

The dance craze occurred during the Progressive era in American political and social life. It was a period marked by a new sense of individuality, of greater consumer consumption, of the demand for "cheap amusement" by working class men and women, and the expectation for dating and courtship outside of parental control. Dancehalls became the embodiment of these newfound social expectations.<sup>72</sup> Dancehall culture challenged old stereotypes about gender roles, and encouraged new attitudes about recreation, "sexuality, modernity, and personal identity".<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz*, 80.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

The uncontrolled dancehalls, uninhibited ragtime dancing, the clearly racial implications of the music and dance, and the often cynical and suggestive lyrics of ragtime songs, drew the ire and concern of religious leaders, social reformers, educators, critics, and conservative musicians. *New York Sun* music critic H.E. Krehbiel feared ragtime music and dance were “threatening to force grace, decorum, and decency out of the ballrooms of America.” Many in post-Victorian society feared the morally corrupting influence upon decent society of these dangerously vulgar and overtly sensuous new dances, where men and women touched more than fingertips, and bodies moved in ways not fit for public viewing! Establishments that permit such close body holding all but promised the “evil influence” of “unleashed passions” upon impressionable young people.<sup>74</sup> Modern dancing represented social decay, the rise in influence of the darker races, and was anathema to the Puritan ethic that, at least on the surface, drove America’s moral agenda.

Among some medical professionals, ragtime dancing was considered a mental illness and a threat to public health. One respected physician claimed,

Many of the new cases of insanity developed in the United States in the last few years may be traced to modern eccentric dances as a causal source, and one-tenth of the insane of this country have lost their minds on account of the troubles which may correctly be tied to modern dances.<sup>75</sup>

Modern dancing was also alleged to be the cause of numerous physical ailments, notably “turkey leg,” an inflammation of the Sartorius muscle caused by excessive turkey trotting.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn*, 9.

<sup>75</sup> Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz*, 102.



Reaction to ragtime and syncopated dancing from religious leaders ranged from strong rebuke to a request for a Papal ban on all modern dancing.<sup>77</sup> Evangelist Billy Sunday called modern dancing a “moral grave yard,” that “nothing causes the ruin of more girls than the damnable rotten dancing.” Dancehalls were “hotbeds of immorality,” and syncopated dancing little more than “a hugging match set to music.”<sup>78</sup> Various restrictions were placed on modern dancing during this time. Syncopated dancing was banned for all United States Naval Academy Midshipmen. The New Haven, Connecticut police shut down all public dances where modern dances were performed. Chicago banned all “wiggling dances.” Dallas, Colorado police declared that there must be discernable daylight between dance partners. New York Mayor Gaynor put a bill banning modern dancing before the state legislature and authorized raids on dancehalls, cabarets, and dancing schools. Even President Woodrow Wilson, fearing guests might perform “animal dances,” cancelled his inaugural ball.<sup>79</sup> While much of this fear may have been cultural paranoia, actual incidents of lawlessness stemming from dancehalls only added fuel to the fires of condemnation. A stabbing occurred at a Grants Pass, Oregon dancehall after an attempt to enforce a “no animal dancing” rule. A West Virginia woman shot three people when a local band played “waltzy music when she wanted ragtime.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 101

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 93-94.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 102.

Ragtime music and modern dancing also highlighted another troubling social issue of the day: the emergence of a new, strong, independent American woman. Young working class women saw social dancing as a way to break from the traditions and conventions of the last century. Social dancing was a means of expressing the styles, fashions, and trends of the time. Social dancing was a means of cultivating relationships, both platonic and romantic. It provided for both men and women the opportunity to escape a mundane, workaday existence, if but for just a short time. Dancehalls became synonymous with the new American woman: modern, independent, strong, and sexual.<sup>81</sup> Keeping current with the latest dance became a social necessity, and industrial lunch breaks often turned into impromptu dance schools. In one infamous incident, sixteen female employees of Philadelphia's Curtis Publishing Company were fired after being found practicing the fox trot during their lunch hour. Even as working class young women were imitating the dances, fashions, and pastime practices of the upper class, the upper class, in their paternalistic way, feared these young women, who lacked the breeding and education of their social betters, would fall victim to the lure of what has been referred to as "the darker nature" of ragtime.<sup>82</sup>

In New York, America's great urban metropolis, the dance craze coincided with the rise in the city's cabaret society. Cabaret society itself developed from the city's successful restaurant industry, and was fueled by attempts to relocate social dancing from homes and private spaces to more public places.<sup>83</sup> By the early 1910's, cabaret had

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 81.

<sup>83</sup> Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn*, 7.

become a generic term for any establishment that offered dinner, drinks, and dancing. The center of this new urban nightlife was Times Square, the region of Midtown Manhattan beginning at Broadway and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and from West 42<sup>nd</sup> to West 47<sup>th</sup> Streets. This entertainment mecca combined theater and vaudeville, excellent hotels, and world-class restaurants, drawing men and women from all socioeconomic strata to the same general location. And as the theater and entertainment business grew, so grew the hotels and restaurants.<sup>84</sup> By 1910, in response to the growing demand for public social dancing, restaurants and hotels were beginning to install dance floors. George Rector, owner of famous Rector's at Broadway and 46<sup>th</sup> Street, speaks of retrofitting a dance floor into a busy restaurant, without losing tables for diners.

All they wanted to do was dance, and we accommodated them with a dance floor that was 30 feet by 20 feet. The entire 1500 all tried to dance on this postage stamp at the same time.<sup>85</sup>

These small dance floors would affect the style of social dancing that cabaret patrons could perform, limiting the wild and ballistic gesticulations of the “animal dances.” The “modern dancing” born on these crowded dance floors requiring closer couples contact, and led to the development of dances that were based on little more than walking. Cabaret owners were also booking more entertainment in the nature of dance orchestras and exhibition dance teams.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 9.

Cabarets, along with important role as social meeting places, helped to popularize exhibition dancers.<sup>87</sup> Exhibition dance teams began to appear in cabarets and dance halls between 1910 and 1911. In addition to dancing for the entertainment of patrons, exhibition dancers created proprietary versions of the current dances, normally amounting to minor variations sufficient to place their individual stamp on a unique version. Exhibition dancers would dance two or three sets an evening, each set followed by patrons or guests learning any new steps themselves. Exhibition dancers would also perform for private functions, work as instructors for afternoon tea dances, and appear on the vaudeville and Broadway musical stages. By the time the Castles returned from France, exhibition dancers had become recognized professionals, demanding top dollar for their services.<sup>88</sup>

Vernon and Irene Castle, the clean-cut, boy-and-girl-next-door looking couple, and their dignified and sanitized trots and one-steps, were seen by some as a means of cleaning up the tawdry image of modern dancing, and presenting it to polite American society as a dignified, healthful, and wholesome pastime. As Irene said of them, “We were clean cut; we were married, and when we danced there was nothing suggestive about it...We made dancing look like the fun it was, and so gradually we became a middle ground both sides could accept.”<sup>89</sup> Both Europe and the Castles brought an element of dignity, class, and social acceptability into the dance craze. Both were influential in the moving music and dance in a more refined and controlled direction,

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>89</sup> Irene Castle, *Castles in the Air*, 86.

making it universally acceptable across ethnic and socio-economic lines. The Castle's plan to raise the public perception of social dancing very much paralleled Europe's efforts to legitimate black popular music.<sup>90</sup> Both were working regularly at the private social events of "the 400." And both were considered the tops in their respective fields. So it would seem inevitable that Europe and the Castles would perform together at some point.

Europe and the Castles may have crossed paths at private party for one of "the 400" families late in the summer of 1912.<sup>91</sup> More likely their first meeting was at an August 22, 1913 party at the home of society matron Mr. Stuyvesant Fish, the most important event of the Newport summer season. Mrs. Fish had engaged Europe's newest enterprise, James Reese Europe's Select Orchestra. This was an ensemble of the best black players, but more so a marketing tool Europe used to in order to ensure he was booking the finest, most exclusive, and best paying events and venues. The Castles were also engaged for this event. Mr. Fish was one of the society benefactors enlisted to invest in Castle House, the Castle's East 46<sup>th</sup> Street dance school.<sup>92</sup> Prior to this time, the Castles were relegated to working with whatever orchestra that had been engaged for the

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<sup>90</sup> Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 441.

<sup>91</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 81.

<sup>92</sup> Elizabeth Marbury, the Castle's agent, conceived of Castle House as a "modern school for modern dancing," and a focal point for Vernon and Irene's growing dance empire. The combination cabaret and dance school was housed in a two-story brick mansion across the street from the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. The building and its two ballrooms were suitably appointed for the wealthy clientele the Castle's sought to attract. Although Europe was to supply the music, an all-white Castle House Orchestra was also secured, for those patrons who found dancing to a black orchestra beneath them. David Gilbert describes this capitalization plan: "Selling their refinement helped the Castles capitalize on the increased popularity of social dancing in the most lucrative ways: by selling their dance steps to the most affluent New Yorkers for the greatest sums possible." (Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 443)

venue or event at which they were dancing. Most dance orchestras, white and black, were more than capable of adequately performing waltzes, tangos, and two-step marches. Only black musicians played the syncopated ragtime music that fit the Castle's dance styling. Europe's Society Orchestra, with their singular ragtime arrangements, superior instrumentalists, and outstanding presentation, proved the perfect complement to the Castle's refined dancing. After hearing and dancing to Europe's orchestra, Vernon hired Europe on the spot to be exclusive music for the Castles, with the understanding that all of the Castle's future bookings would stipulate music by Europe's Society Orchestra only. By late fall 1913, Europe and his orchestra were integrated into the entire Castle enterprise, which included: their exhibition engagements; the Castle House dance classes; vaudeville stage performances; a national tour; and performing in the Castle's nightclubs, Sans Souci, Castles in the Air, and Castles-by-the-Sea, which opened in 1913, 1914, and 1915 respectively.<sup>93</sup>

Even as the Castles were branding themselves through their sanitized dance and stylish personal image, they were helping to promote Europe's agenda of promoting African American musicians professionally and the new African American popular music culturally.<sup>94</sup> The mutual benefits of this collaboration were obvious: the Castles had the most prestigious syncopated dance orchestra, of any race, performing for them all of the time, adding to their prestige and increasing their market value; Europe now had a partner

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<sup>93</sup> The Castle marketing program, in addition to performances and their venues, included a dance manual, the silent movie "The Whirl of Life," a marketing deal with Victor Phonograph Company, and an enormous variety of consumer goods branded with the Castle name.

<sup>94</sup> Gilbert, *Clef Club Inc.*, 442.

and advocate who could help open doors for him that might otherwise remain closed to an African American entertainer, even one of Europe's solid reputation.

In order to meet the commitment of his new collaboration with the Castles, Europe terminated his association with the Clef Club. This professional divorce may have been as much about the inability of many Clef Club musicians to satisfactorily play Europe's instrumental dance music as with Europe's ability to manage the business. Roughly a week after tendering his resignation from Clef Club, Europe formed a new organization, the Tempo Club, modeled closely on Clef Club, with a clear intention to maintain control in the emerging popular music field, exploiting new opportunities for black musicians, and uphold the highest artistic, moral, and social standards among black professional musicians.

Europe scored several significant firsts during this time. Between December 1913 and October 1914, Europe and his orchestra made a historic set of recordings for Victor records, the first commercial recordings by a black ensemble. The December session featured four numbers (two one step/trots, an Argentine tango, and a maxixe), not original Europe compositions. The second recording session in February featured three Europe Castle compositions, along with a Jerome Kern tune from a current theatrical production. A third session in October yielded a trot and a waltz, both rejected. Chapter 4 provides a thorough review of the Victor recordings. Europe composed a total of eleven published dance selections for the Castles, all published between in March 1914 and March 1915. They included trots, one steps, waltzes, Brazilian maxixe, and Argentine tangos. Europe also composed selections to accompany some of the Castle's signature

dance creations: the lame duck waltz; the innovation trot; and the half-and-half, a trot done to mixed meter of alternating 2 and 3.

On January 12, 1914, the Castles performed on the vaudeville stages of the Palace Theater and Hammerstein's Victoria Theater, both on Time's Square. The Castles insisted Europe's orchestra provide their music. The segregated musicians union refused, fearing black musicians might come to dominate theater music, just as black musicians were dominating the city's cabarets and society engagements. Grave consequences were threatened if black musicians were allowed in the Broadway theater orchestra pits. Europe's orchestra accompanied the Castles from seats on the stage.<sup>95</sup> The white and black press of New York both reported the barrier against black musicians playing first class theaters for white artists finally broken.<sup>96</sup>

Europe did not abate his work with Tempo Club, the publication of new songs and dance compositions, and his efforts to establish a truly African American instrumental music. Toward this goal, as an outgrowth of the successful Clef Club and Tempo Club Symphony Orchestras, Europe developed the National Negro Symphony Orchestra. It featured the best black instrumentalists, utilized a unique instrumentation similar to the Clef Club Symphony, and showcased important African American artist like baritone Harry T. Burleigh, soprano Abbie Mitchell, and Will Marion Cook and his Afro-American Folk Song Singers. Much as with the Clef Club and Tempo Club

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<sup>95</sup> A very different version of this story has the white union musicians, despite their initial distain, were so impressed by the African American musicians that the white musicians insisted Europe and his musicians play from the stage, where they could be considered performers rather than back-up musicians. (Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 275.)

<sup>96</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 89.



orchestras, Europe was seeking to overcome the popular stereotypes of black music and entertainers, and lay to rest the heritage of minstrelsy and “coon songs.” He sought to present black music with pride and dignity.<sup>97</sup> The Castles appeared as special guest performers.

Several New York newspapers interviewed Europe in 1914. He used the opportunities to opine on African American music, musicians, and the relative success of his professional efforts. In an April 1914 New York Post article, Europe said African Americans have created a unique music that is “a product of our souls.”<sup>98</sup> Blacks, he felt, are best served playing their own music, and whites theirs; neither race is well suited to compose or perform the music of the other. He defended his use of mandolins and banjos and ten pianos in the Clef Club Symphony Orchestra as “essentially typical of negro harmony.”<sup>99</sup> Given the instrumentation of the Clef Club Symphony Orchestra was based on the use of every available member performing, Europe’s comments are somewhat disingenuous.

Europe spoke of African American musicians working in a white dominated industry in a November interview with the New York Tribune. Although Europe’s Tempo Club musicians controlled a sizable share of the cabaret and private orchestra work in New York, black musicians continued to receive considerably less in sheet music royalties and recording licenses fees than did their white counterparts. In spite of his efforts, the practice continued unabated. Europe considered this disparity but a small

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<sup>97</sup> Goines and Shepherd, “James Reese Europe and His Impact on the New York Scene,” 6.

<sup>98</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 276.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

price in the larger battle for justice.<sup>100</sup> He called African American music America's only real folk music, and since folk music is the basis of so much great music, "there is indeed hope for the art product of our race."<sup>101</sup>

In the spring of 1914, Europe and his orchestra accompanied the Castles on a 28-day/30-city tour of Northeastern and Midwest cities. The Castle Whirlwind Tour, as it was marketed, traveled as far west as Omaha, north to Toronto, and as far south as Washington DC. Much as the Castles wished to travel further south, it would have to have been without Europe and his black musicians, and the Castles were not inclined to work without Europe and his uniquely danceable ragtime. The mixed-race company included the Castles, their personal manager, a road manager, three student dancers from Castle House, and Europe's 18-member orchestra. The company traveled via three private Pullman train cars: one for the Castles and the white members; one for Europe and the black musicians; a third for luggage and equipment.<sup>102</sup>

The tour show itself was a two-part format. Each performance was half exhibition dancing, and, in order to encourage attendance, half local dance contest, with Vernon and Irene as judges.<sup>103</sup> The evening would begin with an overture by Europe and the orchestra. Vernon and Irene began with their signature dance "The Castle Walk." While Irene made her first costume change of the evening, a couple from Castle House would dance a hesitation waltz. The Castles would dance a tango, then the orchestra would play *The*

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 103-104.

<sup>103</sup> Golden, *Vernon and Irene Castle's Ragtime Revolution*, 106.

*Dance Furore* while Irene changed gowns again. The Castles finished out the half demonstrating the maxixe, half and half, and a gavotte. During the break, Irene made yet another dress change. They would then take a break, during which Irene would change into another fashionable costume.<sup>104</sup>

During the dance break, Europe's orchestra would perform several signature "hot" ragtime numbers, and often feature a vocal quartet made up of orchestra members. A featured highlight was a solo number by Europe's drummer, Buddy Gilmore, often performing with his drum student, Vernon Castle, in a sort of vaudeville novelty routine. The idea of a single trap drummer playing a variety of drums, cymbals, pedal bass drum, and orchestral percussion instruments was fairly common practice in black vaudeville by 1914. This is especially significant on the Whirlwind Tour because of the novelty entertainment effect it afforded the act. Equally as important was the increasing role of percussion and percussionists in adding new tonal colors and rhythmic excitement to dance music.<sup>105</sup> This new style of ragtime drumming, very much typified in Buddy Gilmore, was busier, louder, far more syncopated, and geared toward driving dancers. It may also be seen as a significant step in the evolution of drumming in American popular music that would culminate in the contemporary drum set and popular music drumming styles.<sup>106</sup>

The second half would always begin with Vernon entering the stage alone, prefacing the contest with advice on how the Castle's signature dances should be

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 105.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

performed. Only after this moment of marketing would Irene enter.<sup>107</sup> The second half of the show, the Castle Trophy Tournament, was a contest for local dancers, with the winners invited to perform in New York with the Castles.

By all accounts, the tour company was a highly disciplined and thoroughly professional group. The work schedule was unrelenting; the expectations were extremely high, as were the stakes. A less-than-stellar showing by the Castles might have undermined their image, reputation, and marketing capacity. The same could be said for Europe, with the additional pressure of being a pioneering African American musician, orchestra leader, and promoter of an African American music. Irene recalls the tour as “a happy, boisterous, crazy trip.”<sup>108</sup> Orchestra member William Elkins remembered the company as “perfectly disciplined,” and an experience that everyone enjoyed.<sup>109</sup>

As a means of maintaining standards and discipline, and to blow off a bit of steam, the company would gather in the musician’s car and hold mock trials for members’ accused of misbehavior on the road. Everyone, even the Castles, were subject to the court, with fines normally no more severe than purchasing the beer for the next day. One story that truly illustrates the tour company’s intolerance toward racism involved the mock trial of one of the white dancers overheard referring to a fellow troop member by that worst of racial epithets. When a musician brought the situation to Vernon Castle, he insisted that the dancer be brought before the company tribunal, so the incident could be aired before everyone. In the end, the dancer was charged sandwiches, champagne, and refreshments

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<sup>107</sup> Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn*, 55.

<sup>108</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 109.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

for the group. What could have become an ugly and divisive affair became an opportunity for open communication, reconciliation, and fellowship.<sup>110</sup>

Credit must be given to the leadership demonstrated by Europe and the Castles. Europe had the reputation of being a tough disciplinarian, always demanding the highest of musical and personal standards from his musicians. One would imagine Europe's expectations of his musicians on national tour performing with and for whites, in which they would be representing all African Americans, would have been exceptionally high indeed. As far as the Castles, Europe considered them "the best friend of the colored professional," because they generally treated Europe and his black musicians with courtesy, dignity, and respect, behavior that the Castle's station in society did not require of them. "Race, color, creed nor religion mark their lives," said Europe of his collaborators.<sup>111</sup> Certainly the Castle's acceptance of Europe and the black orchestra members as professional men and artists must certainly have influenced how these African Americans were perceived and accepted by the white public during the tour.

Response to the Castle Whirlwind Tour was overwhelmingly positive, with the audiences generally thrilled for the opportunity to see the legendary dance team in person. Response to Europe and the orchestra were generally positive as well, if not marked by some confusion on the part of white audiences to the black musicians, and a racially mixed company.<sup>112</sup> Most Midwestern audiences might only have experienced black

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Golden, *Vernon and Irene Castle's Ragtime Revolution*, 108.

<sup>112</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 109.

entertainers from the days of minstrelsy.<sup>113</sup> For the vast majority of the audiences, this would be their first exposure to this unique syncopated ragtime music, performed by a leading exponent. Never the less, some reviewer could not avoid the opportunity to bring race into conversation. One such review in the *Minneapolis Journal*, by former prizefighter Butch Johnson, is rife with racist ridicule:

Chocolate Joe is on the stage playing a base (sic) drum, snare drum, cymbal, a whistle and one or two other instruments all at once, and no kid (sic), that's right. He plays with his feet, knees, and teeth. A lot of darky musicians sit in the regular music makers' places, and if it was a traveling medicine show I could sense it out, but what those society people are putting down good coin to see it for is what gets me.<sup>114</sup>

Financially, the Whirlwind Tour was hugely successful, earning an estimated \$85,000 (roughly \$2 million in 2012 dollars)<sup>115</sup>, a third of which went to the Castles directly. Although there are no reports of how much Europe and his musicians were paid, there are no documented reports of dissatisfaction.<sup>116</sup>

Artistically, the most enduring dance of the Castle's dance inventions, the fox trot, came from the Whirlwind tour. During the tour, Europe had developed an interest in a new musical form, the instrumental blues, and in particular the 1912 composition, *The Memphis Blues*, by Memphis composer W.C. Handy. This was Handy's first published composition, and Europe was the first bandleader to perform it. Europe approached Vernon with the selection, performed at a slower tempo than the usual rags and

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>114</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 108.

<sup>115</sup> *The Inflation Calculator*. <http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi> (Accessed March 24, 2013).

<sup>116</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 111.

syncopated selections, as a possible dance tune. Vernon was initially cool to the idea, sure that the public was far more interested in dances performed at brighter tempos. After developing steps and trying them out at some private events, Vernon was surprised to find the dance a success.<sup>117</sup>

The June 30, 1915 *Dramatic Mirror* referred to the Castles as, “our supreme ballroom artists, possessing distinction, intelligence, delicacy of dance, and what is termed in the varieties – class.”<sup>118</sup> Much as Vernon and Irene Castle were dominant figures in the 1910s social dance craze, James Reese Europe was a dominant figure in the pre-World War I New York music scene. Certainly, as previously mentioned, he had done much to boost the reputation and employment opportunities of African American musicians. But perhaps the single strongest indicator of the hold he and the black musicians he led, mentored, and inspired had on the popular scene in New York was the negligible influence and popularity of musicians from New Orleans who were performing more frequently in New York during this time.<sup>119</sup> An example is Freddie Keypad, a New Orleans “creole of color,” and his Creole Band, who arrived in New York in 1915, at the height of Europe’s fame and power. It is possible that Keypad’s act, filled with skits and comedy routines, and their music, less sophisticated than that of Europe’s better trained and seasoned performers, may have sounded strangely uncultured to a New York

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<sup>117</sup> This was not the first dance to carry the name “fox trot.” There had been a fox trot that originated in San Francisco’s Barbary Coast, from the same time as the Texas tommy. And any number of dancers of the “dance craze” era have laid claim to inventing the fox trot. Vernon credits Europe with the inspiration for the dance; Europe in turn credits Handy, the developer of the musical form.

<sup>118</sup> Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz*, 76.

<sup>119</sup> Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (New York: Oxford Press, 1968), 250.

audience long accustomed to a tighter and more professional presentation.<sup>120</sup> It would take Europe's wartime departure from the city's performing scene, and the arrival of white bands, like the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in 1917, to permit New Orleans jazz groups to have a lasting impression on popular music in New York.<sup>121</sup>

Europe and the Castles continued to appear together regularly through the first part of 1915. The last time Europe and the Castles appeared together was at the April 15, 1915 benefit performance by the Tempo Club Symphony Orchestra for the Music School Settlement for Colored People, held at Carnegie Hall. World War I marked the end of the Europe/Castle collaboration, as well as the end of Vernon and Irene Castle's dance partnership.<sup>122</sup> Vernon, a loyal and patriotic Englishman, left show business during the summer of 1915 in order to join the British Royal Flying Corps as a combat pilot. He shot down two German planes in air-to-air combat, and was awarded the Croix de Guerre for bravery in combat by the government of France.<sup>123</sup> After surviving more than 100 combat missions, Vernon Castle was killed during a training exercise near Fort Worth, TX in 1918.

For all intents and purposes, Irene Castle's career as a dancer of distinction ended with Vernon's departure. She worked occasionally with Europe until 1916. Following Vernon's departure, Irene danced with other partners, never able to recapture the great

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> It also ended, for all intents and purposes, the Castle's all-to-brief marriage. Even before he departed for the war, Vernon was growing weary of Irene. During flight training he began an affair with Gwen Wilmot, the sister of a fellow aviator. Vernon intended to divorce Irene and marry Gwen once the war was over.

<sup>123</sup> Golden, *Vernon and Irene Castle's Ragtime Revolution*, 176.



success she had enjoyed with Vernon. She continued to perform on the stage, and starred in 19 silent movies. From the mid-1920s onward, Irene became more of a personality and fashion icon than a performer. She published a memoir of her years with Vernon, *Castles in the Air*, and had a short-lived radio show in the 1930s. She remarried three times, and in latter life gained distinction as an animal advocate. Irene Castle died in 1969. She and Vernon are buried together in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx.

Like Vernon Castle, James Reese Europe also went on to distinguish himself in the war. In 1916 he was asked by William Haywood, commander of the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the New York National Guard to take command of the regimental band of the all-black unit. With a philanthropic grant of \$10,000, and a commission as a lieutenant, Europe accepted. Utilizing his connections with black musicians on the east coast, Cuba and Puerto Rico, Europe was able to recruit top-notch musicians and increase the band's size to roughly sixty. In 1917, the regiment, now activated into the U.S. Army and redesignated the 369<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, left for France. The band, along with the entire 369<sup>th</sup>, was assigned to the French army as combat troops.<sup>124</sup> The band served as a machine gun company. The 369<sup>th</sup> served more days in combat than any other American

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<sup>124</sup> General John "Black Jack" Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, refused to allow African American combat troops to fight for the United States. The French, their ranks depleted from years of unrelenting combat, gladly accepted the black troops. During his early career as a cavalry officer, Lieutenant Pershing commanded a troop of the all-black 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, in service in the American Southwest, and in Cuba during the Spanish-American War. The sobriquet "Black Jack" was a term of ridicule for Pershing's service with black troops, which would have been considered a demeaning assignment for a rising white officer. There is some disagreement over whether Pershing banned African American troops from combat in consideration of segregationist politics at home, or as a way of playing down his past service. Oral tradition among African Americans tends to favor the later choice.

unit in WWI. And as a band, Europe's 369<sup>th</sup> "Hellfighters" Band is credited with bringing instrumental ragtime, now also being referred to as jazz, to the European continent.

Europe returned a hero, and immediately signed contracts to record and tour the Hellfighter's Band. He continued to further his objectives for developing African American music, more convinced than before the war that African Americans must develop a unique musical voice, separate and distinct from the European art music tradition.<sup>125</sup> Europe's post-war musical enterprise capitalized on the existing Hellfighters Band and their conventional wind band instrumentation, a more conventional idiom than the more string-intensive setups of his pre-war dance orchestras. The bands programming featured instrumental blues, syncopated music, popular songs and singers, skits and drum features, all performed in Europe's signature "hot" fashion. Tragically, during the band's premier American tour performance, Europe was stabbed during an argument with one of the band's drummers, and bled to death shortly afterward.

James Reese Europe was without doubt one of the most influential and respected musicians of the 1910's, yet paradoxically one of the least remembered. Part of his enduring legacy is the interesting and innovative recordings he produced, particularly the 1913/1914 Victor sessions. These recordings in many ways are precursors to the big band jazz recordings of the late 1920s and 1930s.

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<sup>125</sup> "A Negro Explains Jazz." (*Literary Digest* 1919. April 26, 1919), 28.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE EUROPE/CASTLE COMPOSITIONS

Prior to their collaboration with James Reese Europe, Vernon and Irene Castle had been dancing to generic dance music, with no selections composed specifically for them, or branded to the Castle name in any way. Europe, who had roughly two dozen popular songs and instrument compositions published by this time in his career, accommodated the Castles by producing eleven Castle-branded dance selections.<sup>126</sup> There is no documented or oral historical evidence explaining the origins of any of these “Castle specials,” or whether the dance steps or the music came first. Vernon Castle’s comments in *Modern Dancing*, in which he stresses the importance of the dancer being “so attuned to the music that he merely expresses the themes of the composer...” would suggest that the music preceded the dance.<sup>127</sup> Additionally, Irene Castle’s mention in a personal correspondence that Europe “originated many new ‘tempos’” gives additional credence to dance inspired by music.<sup>128</sup> It is known for certain that Europe’s suggestion

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<sup>126</sup> Several sources referred to for this study listed ten compositions. The different accounting might either exclude *Congratulations Waltz* (no mention of Castle in the title), or *Castle Doggie Fox Trot* (published toward the end of the working collaboration).

<sup>127</sup> Castle, *Modern Dancing*, 23.

<sup>128</sup> Rick Benjamin. “James Reese Europe: Music and Culture.” *The Music of James Reese Europe* (New York, Marks, 2012), viii.

of *The Memphis Blues* inspired the fox trot, and the five-four meter *Half and Half* was a Europe original.<sup>129</sup>

Europe's composing partner for eight of these selections was fellow Washingtonian and Clef Club colleague Ford T. Dabney. Dabney was an established composer, conductor, and pianist in his own right. Because Europe and Dabney possessed such similar styles, it has proven impossible to decipher who might have written what. The lack of documented mention of their collaborative work or specific contributions further stymies attempts at specific attribution. All that is ever mentioned are the Sunday afternoons in March, April, and June of 1914, when Europe and Dabney would demonstrate their latest musical creations, performed piano four-hands, in the Castle's living room.<sup>130</sup>

The New York music publishing firm of Joseph W. Stern published nine of the eleven Castle-branded selections. Stern, who had been one of Europe's publishers since 1906, also published stock dance orchestra and wind band arrangements of several of these selections. Stern was one of the first American music publishers to work with African American composers, songwriters, arrangers, and editors. From the late 1890s well into the first decade of the twentieth century, Stern worked with the leading figures in African American music.<sup>131</sup> Since Europe's contract with Stern was non-exclusive, Europe also published two of the Castle specials - *Congratulations Waltz* and *Castle*

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<sup>129</sup> Although the Castles held up the *Half and Half* as wholly original, Reid Badger, in his introductory essay to *The Music of James Reese Europe*, mentions five-four music composed in the nineteenth century by African American composer Francis Johnson.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Benjamin. "James Reese Europe: Music and Culture," xi.

*Doggie Fox Trot* – with the American branch of the Italian firm Ricordi. Both of these were arranged as solo piano scores and corresponding stock arrangements by Ricordi staff arranger J. Lewis von der Mehden, Jr.<sup>132</sup>

The melodies and harmonies Europe and Dabney utilize are quite direct, and certainly written with the dance in mind; nothing melodically, harmonically, rhythmically, or formulaically distracts from the dance-ability of this music. Melodies are diatonic, with the occasional use of chromatics in the form of passing tones and auxiliaries, and tend to remain within an octave. Harmonic usage is primarily diatonic, with the occasional secondary dominant seventh. The basic melody/accompaniment structure sticks closely to the popular music convention of the time, based around a two-staff solo piano framework. This features left hand/bass clef score moving between bass notes on the down beats and an off-beat chordal accompaniment, very much in the march/ragtime tradition. The right hand/treble clef score contains the melodic material. While music of this time is known generically as syncopated dance music, Europe/Castle compositions contain varying amounts of syncopation. In the 144 measures of *Castle House Rag*, only 32 contain syncopated rhythms. *The Castle Walk*, on the other hand, contains syncopation in almost half of its measures. *Castle's Half and Half* contains no syncopation at all.

The forms of these dance compositions, built on contrasting strains in closely related keys, are typical of the ragtime and syncopated dance music of this era. All of the

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<sup>132</sup> Europe, while clearly satisfied enough with his contract with Ricordi to publish eighteen works in two years, considered the crediting of Ricordi staff editors as arrangers on Europe's solo piano sheet music a professional affront. He also complained that Ricordi did not pay African American composers as much as their white counterparts. In spite of this, Ricordi published almost every Europe composition from May of 1915 until he entered the military. (Benjamin, "James Reese Europe: Music and Culture," xi.)

compositions indicated as “walk,” “trot,” or “one-step” are built in two large sections, the second in the key of the subdominant of the first. This is a fairly standard convention adopted from march and ragtime forms. A common feature of the first strains is two contrasting 16 or 32-measure blocks, A and B, with the B appearing between repetitions of A. Patterns of AABBA are very common in first strains of these dance forms. Both of the Europe/Castle waltzes include an introduction in a different meter, two strains in contrasting keys, and a third “coda” strain that includes a reprise of the first strain A theme, ending in a brief brilliant codetta. Europe and Dabney compose in major and minor keys, primarily major. Minor keys always incorporate modulation to and from the relative major.

*Castle House Rag (Trot and One-Step)*

This was the first of the Europe/Castle compositions, commemorating Vernon and Irene’s chic Manhattan dance school. The form follows that of the Scott Joplin’s commercially popular *Maple Leaf Rag*; four melodic strains presented in an AABBACCDD arrangement. Europe combines the dotted eighth and sixteenth note Rhythm of the older style Schottische and Barn Dance with syncopated ragtime figurations.<sup>133</sup> The trio strain features a stop-time figure, allowing the dancer’s feet to be heard.<sup>134</sup> Tonality in the first strain can be viewed in two different ways. In *A Life in Ragtime*, Reid Badger suggests a shifting tonality between C major and C minor.<sup>135</sup> This

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<sup>133</sup> Benjamin, “James Reese Europe: Music and Culture,” viii.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 91.

author hears the tonality in C major, with the e-flats and b-flats as blues inflections. Blues elements were appearing commonly in ragtime of this period, and would become thoroughly integrated into the harmonic and melodic language of jazz.<sup>136</sup>

#### *Castles in Europe (The Innovation Trot)*

The Innovation was a dance concept presented by exhibition dancers of the era, where the couple danced without touching. Vernon and Irene Castle introduced their signature *Innovation Trot* at a 1914 winter ball hosted by New York society matron, and Castle House patron, Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish. It is not documented whether this selection was performed to accompany the Castles at that event. Presented with the key signature for C major, the four-measure introduction is in C minor; the use of E-flat, and particularly A-flat as melodic and harmonic elements (refer to cadential pattern in measure 4) clearly distinguish this as C minor, rather than the blues inflection in *Castle House Rag*. The B theme of the first strain actually changes key signatures to that of C minor, a unique feature of this selection. The F major Trio strain of *Castles in Europe* features a 16-measure interlude, in the relative minor of D minor. This sort of “breakup strain” is very common in the march literature, and can be seen in some of John Philip Sousa’s marches, like *Stars and Stripes Forever*, *The Liberty Bell*, and *Hands Across the Sea*.

#### *The Castle Walk (Trot and One-Step)*

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<sup>136</sup> David A. Jasen. *Ragtime: An Encyclopedia, Discography, and Sheetography*. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1.

This was the first of the compositions Europe co-wrote with Ford T. Dabney. Although the copyright date is April 3, 1914, such dates indicate publication more than composition dates.<sup>137</sup> This Castle proprietary dance was derived from the one-step, the ubiquitous walking couples dance technique that was so popular. The simple and direct form does not utilize any interludes or transitions. The piece begins and ends in F major, with a change of mode to the relative minor (D minor) in the second section (C). The minor tonality and syncopated figuration create a somewhat exotic effect, reminiscent of the first strains of Sousa's *Nobles of the Mystic Shrine* and *Bravura* by C.E. Duble, both popular marches of the early twentieth century.

#### *Castle Perfect Trot (One Step)*

There is no indication whether *Castle Perfect Trot* was composed for an existing dance, composed to inspire a new dance, or simply a catchy title. The original sheet music cover includes the wording, "Introduced by Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle." Whether "introduced" refers to the music or a dance step called "Castle Perfect Trot" is unknown. There is no mention of a Perfect Trot in any of the Castle proprietary dances listed in *Modern Dancing*. *Castle Perfect Trot* "combines 1890s ragtime licks with the latest in powerful 1910 over-the-bar syncopation."<sup>138</sup> The bottom of the cover of the sheet music lists eight musical selections/dances, identifying them as "Castle Feature Numbers." It includes numbers for which Europe never composed original music ("innovation waltz" and "valse classique"), and does not mention their *Castle's Lame Duck Waltz*, *The*

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<sup>137</sup> Benjamin, "James Reese Europe: Music and Culture," viii.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, ix



*Innovation Trot*, *Castle's Combination*, or the fox trot. *Castle Perfect Trot* was published in 1914, a year before the Castles developed their fox trot, which would explain its absence from the promotion. The absence of the other titles may reflect publishing sequence, cover space limitation, or the popularity of those particular dances and selections over others.

*Castle Lane Duck Waltz / Congratulations (Castle's Lane Duck Waltz)*

Understanding the commercial value of maintaining some ballroom traditions, Vernon and Irene Castle adopted existing dances, in particular, the tried-and-true waltz.<sup>139</sup> A popular variation, the “Hesitation waltz,” had been around for some years as the “Boston” or “Double Boston” waltz. The Castles dubbed their proprietary version “Castle Lane Duck Waltz.”<sup>140</sup> Europe composed two waltzes specifically for the Castles, although there is no indication as to which was composed first. What is known is that *Congratulations* was recorded in the February 1914 Victor session under the title *Castle's Lane Duck Waltz*. It is also one of the two Europe/Castle selections published by Ricordi in an arrangement by J. Louis von der Mehden. The Victor recording lacks the introduction, transition to the final A theme, or codetta of the arrangement. There is no indication as to whether those adaptations were added by the arranger. The presence of a similar different tempo and meter introduction, return transition, and codetta in *Castle Lane Duck Waltz* calls that into question. Both waltzes are truncated versions of the

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> See Chapter 5 for a full description.

classic Viennese waltz model, and, along with the aforementioned introduction, transitions, and codetta, feature lyrical melodies and contrasting sections.

### *Castle Innovative Tango*

Beginning in around 1913, dances of Latin origin began to find their way onto American dance floors and into the routines of exhibition dance teams. The first of these was the tango, with its characteristic syncopated “habanera figure,” so exotic and unfamiliar to North Americans.<sup>141</sup> In the dance lexicon of 1910’s America, tango referred to the music only; the dance steps were essentially another variation on the popular and universally danceable walking one-step.<sup>142</sup> The Castles added the tango to their dance routines in the second half of 1913. A *Castle Dance Folio* published in April 1914 contained tangoes by South American composers. Europe, who was conducting these numbers for the Castles, along with writing partner Dabney created *Castle Innovation Tango*, and a non-Castle tango entitled *Enticement (An Argentine Idyll)*.<sup>143</sup> The rhythmic foundation of the authentic tango - dotted-eighth note, sixteenth note, two eighth notes – is syncopated in *Castle Innovation Tango* by tying the sixteenth to the following eighth. The resultant rhythm is a syncopated version of the so-called “Spanish tinge” of New Orleans pianist and composer Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton. The primary rhythmic

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Castle, *Modern Dancing*, 86.

<sup>143</sup> Benjamin, “James Reese Europe: Music and Culture,” ix.

material in the melody/right hand piano part also features the same rhythmic syncopation, in this case built on two beats worth of sixteenth notes in two-four meter, with the fourth and fifth sixteenth notes tied. The rhythmic effect is reminiscent of Scott Joplin's *Solace* (*A Mexican Serenade*), published only five years previously in 1909.

### *Castle Maxixe*

The Brazilian maxixe (also spelled “mattchiche” and “matcheche”) arrived in America around the same time as the tango.<sup>144</sup> A dance with African and Portuguese roots, it has been called “...essentially [an] Africanized polka or two-step.”<sup>145</sup> The principal rhythmic feature of *Castle Maxixe* is a sixteenth note-eighth note-sixteenth note syncopated hyper-rhythm that undergirds the entire piece. The melodic material is simple and direct, with the melody of Section 2 comprised almost entirely of half notes. The complete return of the A theme at end of *Castle Maxixe* is a feature Europe does not utilize often in his dance music.

### *Castle Half and Half / Castle Combination Waltz-Trot*

Europe composed two truly novelty numbers for the Castles one-of-a-kind dance creations. *Castle Half and Half* is written in five-four meter, divided three-two. The music, the briefest of the Europe/Castle selections, is very simply constructed. It contains no note value greater than a quarter note, and the three-beat division is almost exclusively a dotted half note. It appears more a Castle marketing gimmick than a true dance innovation. The Castles claim the concept of a five-four meter dance tune was

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

unprecedented, but a similar selection in five-four had been composed by African American musician Francis Johnson almost a century before.<sup>146</sup>

*Castle Combination Waltz-Trot* is simply that; a one-step and a waltz in the same selection. Section 1 is a simple trot, featuring very little syncopation, and A and B sections in closely related keys (F and B-flat), which is unique for this idiom. Section 2 is a simple waltz, again in two sections with the same closely related key relationship. The 16-measure coda returns to two-four, the meter of Section 1. The *Allegro Moderato* tempo indication, in contrast to the opening indication of *Tempo di Trot*, suggests a brighter closing tempo.

#### *The Castle Doggie (Fox Trot)*

The fox trot, as developed by Vernon and Irene Castle, was the single most enduring dance from the 1910s Dance Craze. Upon returning from the Whirlwind Tour, where the dance was first conceived and developed, Europe composed a signature Castle fox trot composition for Vernon and Irene. With it Europe begins to display the influence of the new “novelty” music, a notated music inspired by the Dixieland music that began to become popular through the early 1920s. This music features dotted-eighth-and-sixteenth-note figures, more chromatic melodic lines and harmonies than ragtime, and was performed at considerably slower tempi than one-steps and trots.<sup>147</sup> The easy-going, Tin Pan Alley-inspired “swing” of *Castle Doggie* stands in contrast to the more rigid and march-inspired figures and tempos of the trots and one-steps Europe had been composing,

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

and the Castles had been dancing. *Castle Doggie*, published in 1915, was the final Castle-branded composition Europe would compose.

TABLE 3.1 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE HOUSE RAG*

Europe, James Reese. *Castle House Rag (Trot and One Step)*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Allegro moderato</i>										
<b>Meter</b>	Alle Breve										
<b>Sections</b>	Section 1						Section 2 ( <i>Trio</i> )				
<b>Parts</b>	Introduction	A	A	B	B	A	Transition	C <sup>1</sup>	C <sup>2</sup>	Interlude	C <sup>2</sup>
<b>Measures</b>	4	16	16	16	16	16	4	16	16	8	16
<b>Keys</b>	C	C "Blues"	C "Blues"	C	C	C "Blues"	F	F	F	F(vi V <sup>7</sup> )	F

TABLE 3.2 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLES IN EUROPE*

Europe, James Reese. *Castles in Europe (The Innovation Trot)*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Moderato</i>									
<b>Meter</b>	2/4									
<b>Sections</b>	Section 1				Section 2 ( <i>Trio</i> )					
<b>Parts</b>	Introduction	A	B	A	Transition	C	C	Interlude	C	
<b>Measures</b>	4	16	18	16	4	16	16	16	16	
<b>Keys</b>	C Minor	C	C Minor	C	F	F	F	D Minor/F	F	

TABLE 3.3 ANALYSIS OF *THE CASTLE WALK*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *The Castle Walk (Trot and One Step)*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Con spirit</i>							
<b>Meter</b>	2/4							
<b>Sections</b>	Section 1					Section 2		
<b>Parts</b>	Introduction	A	B	B	A	C	C	
<b>Measures</b>	8	32	32	32	32	32	32	
<b>Keys</b>	F	F	F	F	F	D Minor/F	D Minor/F	

TABLE 3.4 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE PERFECT TROT*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *Castle Perfect Trot (One Step)*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Tempo di Trot</i>							
<b>Meter</b>	2/4							
<b>Section</b>	Section 1				Section 2 ( <i>Trio</i> )			
<b>Parts</b>	Introduction	A	B	A	Transition	C	Interlude	C
<b>Measures</b>	4	16	16	16	4	32	12	32
<b>Keys</b>	C	C	A Minor/C	C	F	F	D Minor/F	F

TABLE 3.5 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE LAME DUCK*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *Castle Lane Duck (Waltz)*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Moderato con espressione</i>	<i>Valse</i>								<i>VIVO</i>	
<b>Meter</b>	6/8	3/4									
<b>Section</b>	<i>Introduction</i>	Section 1					Section 2 <i>(dolce)</i>		<i>CODA</i>		
<b>Part</b>	Introduction	A	A	B( <i>Doloroso</i> )	B	A	C	C	Transition	A + transition	Codetta
<b>Measure</b>	8	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	4	30 + 6	6
<b>Key</b>	C						F		C		

TABLE 3.6 ANALYSIS OF *CONGRATULATIONS*

Europe, James Reese. *Congratulations ("Castle's Lane Duck Waltz")*. Arr. J. Louis von der Mehden. New York: Ricordi, 1914.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Moderato con moto</i>	<i>Tempo valse con spirito</i>						<i>Con moto</i>	<i>a tempo I</i>		
<b>Meter</b>	2/4	3/4									
<b>Section</b>	<i>Introduction</i>	1				2		<i>Coda</i>			
<b>Parts</b>	Introduction	A	B	B	A	C	C	Transition	A	Codetta	
<b>Measures</b>	13	32	40	40	32	32	32	20	30	7	
<b>Keys</b>	C	C				F		C			



TABLE 3.7 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE INNOVATION TANGO*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *Castle Innovation Tango. Argentine Tango*. New York: Joseph Stern, 1914.

Tempo	Tempo di Tango								
Meter	2/4								
Section	Section 1							Section 2	
Part	Introduction	A	A	B	B	A	C	C	
Measures	4	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
Keys	D Minor	D Minor/F	D Minor/F	F	F	D Minor/F	F	F	

TABLE 3.8 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE MAXIXE*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *Castle Maxixe (Brazilian Maxixe)*. New York; Joseph W. Stern, 1914

<b>Sections</b>	Section 1					Section 2		"Recapitulation"
<b>Parts</b>	Introduction	A	A	B	A	C	C	A
<b>Measures</b>	4	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
<b>Keys</b>	G	G	G	G	G	C	C	G
<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Moderato</i>							
<b>Meter</b>	2/4							

TABLE 3.9 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE'S HALF AND HALF*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *Castle's Half and Half*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Moderato</i>						
<b>Meter</b>	5/4 (3 + 2)						
<b>Section</b>	Section 1				Section 2		
<b>Part</b>	Introduction	A	B	A	C	C	Codetta
<b>Measures</b>	6 (4 + 2)	16	16	16	16	16	8
<b>Key</b>	C	C	F	C	F	F	F

TABLE 3.10 ANALYSIS OF *CASTLE COMBINATION*

Europe, James Reese and Ford T. Dabney. *Castle Combination (Waltz-Trot)*. New York: Joseph W. Stern, 1914

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Tempo di Trot</i>			<i>Tempo di Valse</i>		<i>Allegro Moderato</i>
<b>Meter</b>	2/4			3/4		2/4
<b>Section</b>	Section 1			Section 2		Coda
<b>Part</b>	Introduction	A	B	C	D	E
<b>Measures</b>	4	32	32	32	32	16
<b>Key</b>	F		B-flat	F	B-flat	F

TABLE 3.11 ANALYSIS OF *THE CASTLE DOGGIE*

Europe, James Reese. *The Castle Doggie (Fox Trot)*. Arr. J. Louis von der Mehden, Jr. New York: Ricordi, 1915.

<b>Tempo</b>	<i>Moderato</i>								
<b>Meter</b>	4/4								
<b>Section</b>	Section 1						Section 2 ( <i>Trio</i> )		
<b>Part</b>	Introduction	A	A	B	B	A	C	C	
<b>Measures</b>	4	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
<b>Key</b>	C						F		

## COMPOSER/ARRANGER BIOGRAPHIES

Tom Clark (1845-1943)

A British native, Tom Clark began a career as a composer, arranger, and cornet instrumentalist in the United States during the “golden age of wind bands.” In his early twenties he played cornet with Patrick Gilmore’s renowned 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment Band. He became the cornet soloist with the Fredrick Innes Band in 1894. Clark, a close friend of composer Victor Herbert, published 30 original wind band compositions between 1894 and 1904, comprised mostly of marches, gallops, polkas, waltzes, and medleys of popular songs. In addition to arranging Europe/Castle music for Stern, he was employed for more than 20 years as a staff arranger for G. Schirmer. Tom Clarks’ wind band arrangements are considered among the best of that period.<sup>148</sup>

Ford Thompson Dabney (1883-1958)

Born in Washington, DC into a musical family, Ford Dabney received his early musical training there contemporaneously with James Reese Europe, although there is no indication that they knew one another. Dabney served as court pianist to President Noro Alexis of Haiti from 1904-1907. On his return to the United States, Dabney organized several touring vaudeville groups, including “Ford Dabney’s Ginger Girls with Effie King and Lottie Gee”, and worked for a time as a theater manager. By 1913 Dabney had settled in New York and was associated with Europe and the Clef Club. His own syncopated dance orchestra became the first black

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<sup>148</sup> Robert Rehrig. *The Heritage Encyclopedia of Band Music*. (Westerville, OH: Integrity Press, 1991), 145.

ensemble to perform regularly on the Broadway stage, performing for Ziegfeld's Midnight Frolic at the New Amsterdam Theater. Dabney followed Europe in resigning from the Clef Club, and with Europe organized the Tempo Club. Dabney also became Europe's writing partner on seven of the eleven Europe/Castle dance compositions, and was a member of Europe's Society Orchestra that accompanied the Castle's on the Whirlwind Tour of 1914. Between 1917 and 1922, Dabney recorded 57 selections in 20 different recording sessions with ensembles under various names, including Dabney's Band, Dabney's Military Band, and Dabney's Novelty Orchestra.<sup>149</sup> Among Dabney's best known works are the musicals *The King's Quest* (1909) and *Rang Tang* (1927), and the song "That's why they call me shine" (1910, lyrics by Cecil Mack),<sup>150</sup> famously sung by John W. "Bubbles" Sublett in the 1943 motion picture *Cabin in the Sky*.

#### J. Louis von der Mehden (1873-1954)

J. Louis von der Mehden was born in San Francisco. He studied music theory, composition, cello, and piano at the Royal Conservatory in Leipzig, graduating in 1894. He received a Bachelor of Music from Yale University in 1922, and a law degree by correspondence from the Chicago School of Law in 1927. Prior to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, von der Mehden was an orchestral cellist, and he

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<sup>149</sup> Tom Lord. *The Jazz Discography*. (West Vancouver, B.C., Canada: Lord Music Reference, 1992), Volume 4, D10-D12.

<sup>150</sup> Eileen Southern. *Biographical Dictionary of Afro-American and African Musicians*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 91-92.

directed concert bands at the Presidio. Relocating to New York following the earthquake, von der Mehden found steady employment as a cellist and conductor with theatrical and commercial ensembles. During the Christmas shopping seasons from 1907 through 1912, he conducted orchestras at Hearn's Department Store. For a number of years he played cello with Ahren's People's Symphony for their series of low-admission educational concerts given at Carnegie Hall. Between 1910 and 1911, von der Mehden conducted operetta at the Herald Square Theater and the Winter Garden. From 1912 through 1918, he was literally employed full-time in the recording industry as a cellist, conductor, and conductor. As a staff editor and arranger for Ricordi from 1915 through 1916, von der Mehden is credited as the arranger for the sheet music editions of Europe's *Congratulations Waltz* and *Castle Doggie*, and arranger for the wind band and orchestra stock arrangements of *Congratulations*. The majority of von der Mehden's composing and arranging output during the decade of the 1910s, particular his recording work, was popular dance music. Toward the end of the decade, he abandoned popular music for more traditional European art music models. His composing and arranging output includes works for orchestra, wind band, chamber ensembles, solo violin, banjo and piano, vocal solos and ensembles, and vaudeville sketches. J. Louis von Mehden's papers are held in the Archives and Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Library.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> James P. Pareakilas. *The Life and Works of J. Louis von der Mehden, 1873-1954*. M.A. thesis, University of Connecticut, 1974.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE VICTOR RECORDINGS OF EUROPE'S SOCIETY ORCHESTRA**

It is quite likely that Europe's reputation as a leading ragtime musician and bandleader, his association with the very popular Castles, and the growing demand for new recordings of current dance music, led the Victor Talking Machine Company to offer a recording contract to Europe and his Society Orchestra. This was an unprecedented, yet perhaps not totally unexpected offer. African Americans had been making recordings since the early days of commercial recording in the late nineteenth century. All of these recordings had been singers and vocal groups. Victor must have considered recording the nation's most prestigious African American dance orchestra leader, with his literal monopoly on performing in most exclusive and lucrative public and private venues to be a safe and smart business decision. And as if to hedge their bets, Victor tied Europe's contract to the marketing and merchandising agreement they made with Vernon and Irene Castle. By November 1914, Victor's catalog of what they referred to as "dance records" numbered close to 400 titles, mostly by the military bands of Walter Rogers and Arthur Pryor. The addition of selections by Europe's orchestra would give Victor's catalog the exclusive cache of both Europe and the Castle's. In some respect, these recordings become the precursors of the "race records" that Victor would market a decade later.

Europe was not the first African American to record. As early as the early 1890's, George W. Johnson, a former slave, recorded an extremely racist minstrel song called

*The Laughing Coon*. Vocal ensembles like The Unique Quartette, The Standard Quartette, The Kentucky Jubilee Singers, and black theater pioneer Bert Williams all recorded vocally before 1900. The Fisk Jubilee Singers helped popularize the Negro spiritual with their early 1900's recordings. Even heavyweight champion Jack Johnson visited the recording studio to memorialize his exploits in and out of the ring on wax cylinders. Europe's Society Orchestra does hold the distinction of being the first African American instrumental ensemble to record.

Although these recordings are justly credited to Europe, it should be noted that the impetus for bring Europe into the studio was as much about marketing the Castle's than putting Europe's music before a larger audience. The Castle's had a marketing agreement with Victor. Their photo appeared in Victor's 1914 catalog supplement, along with special brochures with the couple demonstrating dance steps. The back of the brochure was a reprint of a letter, on the Castle's letterhead, stating that, after much trial and investigation, they would use Victor recordings exclusively in their establishment. The labels affixed to Europe's February recording stated: "Recorded under the personal supervision of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle." In addition to Europe's Society Orchestra, Vernon Castle supervised a set of for Victor recordings with the all-white Castle House Orchestra, led by Frank W. McKee. Again, the Castle's are credited as supervisors for these recordings.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> It is impossible to establish the nature of the supervision. As neither Castle had any appreciable experience or expertise in music performance or recording technology, such supervision may have amounted to their presence in the studio, and perhaps concurrence on tempos. Likely as not, the Castle's stamp of approval on these recordings was part of the marketing and merchandising arrangement they had with Victor.



Although race was not a consideration for the Castle's choosing to work with Europe, it may have been a consideration in the marketing of these recordings and of the instrumental arrangements that were released at the same time. While it was no secret that Europe and his musicians were black, there was never any mention of his ethnicity, or photos of him or his musicians on any promotional material, record jackets, or printed music that was connected with the Castle enterprise. Neither did Europe garner much personal publicity from the recordings. There is speculation that Victor was concerned that marketing a black orchestra would hurt potential sales or cause some sort of racist backlash. As previously mentioned, these recordings were more about Victor record sales, and feeding the Castle promotional and marketing machine than about the historical significance of recording a black ensemble or of ensuring that black artists were recorded and marketed as black artists. While there are no extant sales records, surviving copies suggest that the Europe recordings sold well.

A great many of the syncopated dance recordings of the 1910s were made by wind band, such as the bands of Patrick Conway, Arthur Pryor, and the Victor Military Band.<sup>153</sup> What set Europe's Society Orchestra recordings apart was,

...the rough excitement and rhythmic momentum that simply carried its audiences along physically. Europe, in fact, accomplished what other orchestras failed to do: play ragtime pieces in orchestration as fast as the piano players did.<sup>154</sup>

Although the white concert bands played their ragtime selections cleaner and more precisely, their recordings come off as rigid and unexciting as compared to the

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<sup>153</sup> Schuller, *Early Jazz*, 249.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

overwhelmingly rhythmic orientation of Europe's recordings, and by extension his live performances.<sup>155</sup>

#### FIRST VICTOR SESSION

Europe's Society Orchestra

December 29, 1913

Victor Studios, New York.

#### Personnel<sup>156</sup>

Leader:	James Reese Europe
Flute:	Fred Covite
Clarinet:	Edgar Campbell or John Russell
Cornet:	Cricket Smith
Baritone:	George De Leon
Piano:	Leonard Smith, Ford Dabney
Drums:	Buddy Gilmore or George Jenkins
Banjo Mandolin:	Five unknown players; may include Opal Cooper, Lloyd Smith, William C. Elkins, Joe Meyers, George Waters, or Joe Grey
Violins:	Tracy Cooper, George Smith, Walter Scott, Allie Ross, James van Hooten, or William Tyler
Cello:	Chandler Ford or Leonard Jeter

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 236.

The instrumentation of Europe's ensemble was far different from the wind bands and string orchestras that Victor normally recorded. The pre-microphone technology of 1913 called for the exact placement of difficult-to-record instruments into the large recording cones. Victor's recording technicians, some of the best in the business, managed to put together a relatively full and transparent recording.<sup>157</sup>

This initial recording session featured four selections by composers other than Europe. *Too Much Mustard*, a bright tempo one-step/Turkey trot by British composer Cecil Macklin, was a much-recorded ragtime standard, a dancehall favorite, and a selection the Europe played regularly for the Castle's.<sup>158</sup> African American composer Wilber Sweatman's *Down Home Rag*, was recorded as trot, at an even brighter tempo than *Too Much Mustard*. The remaining selections were *Amapa*, a Brazilian maxixe, and an Argentine tango, *El Irrestible*. These recordings were announced via a special Victor listing that was rushed out in early February 1914.<sup>159</sup>

## SECOND VICTOR SESSION

Europe's Society Orchestra

February 10, 1914

Victor Studios, New York

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<sup>157</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 271.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 273.

Leader:	James Reese Europe
Flute:	Fred Covite
Clarinet:	Edgar Campbell or John Russell
Cornet:	Cricket Smith
Baritone:	George De Leon
Piano:	Leonard Smith, Ford Dabney
Drums:	Buddy Gilmore or George Jenkins
Violins:	Tracy Cooper, George Smith, Walter Scott, Allie Ross, James van Hooten, or William Tyler
Cello:	Chandler Ford or Leonard Jeter
Bass:	George Heyward

For this second session, Europe utilized a somewhat different instrumentation, omitting the five banjo mandolins, and adding a flute, cello, and baritone horn. There is no documented explanation for this change in personnel and instrumental timbres. Possibly Europe and the Victor recording engineers were looking for a more conventional dance orchestra sound. The addition of a baritone horn, an interesting choice for a dance orchestra, reflects Europe's gradual transition from string-intensive ensembles toward a wider use of woodwind and brass instruments.<sup>160</sup> Vernon and Irene Castle were present in the studio, in their role as supervisors of the session.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Badger, *A Life in Ragtime*, 85.

<sup>161</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 273.

Four selections were chosen for this session, three Europe/Castle compositions, and a popular Jerome Kern Broadway show tune, *You're Here and I'm Here*<sup>162</sup> from long-ago forgotten musical, "The Laughing Husband." This cover of a Tin Pan Alley dance selection was performed without any particular elaboration or additional interest intended. Europe gave it a very march-like presentation, recording two repeats of the song form at a very characteristic bright one-step tempo of around 120 beats per minute.

*Castle Walk*<sup>163</sup> was named for Vernon and Irene's first signature dance step. Listed on the published sheet music as a "one-step or trot," Europe took a bright tempo, roughly quarter note at 118, as preferred by Vernon Castle.<sup>164</sup> To the author, the performance was somewhat more lyrical than other selections from the session. The melodic line in the violin predominates the recording. Obbligato sixteenth-note diatonic scale passages in a single violin, played over longer duration notes, is detectable in the background. Because of their almost sporadic and unpredictable occurrences, they give the appearance of being improvised. The active, unrelenting drumming, which emphasizes syncopated rhythmic figures, features forceful rudimental-style snare drumming, which was very characteristic of ragtime drumming.<sup>165</sup> Indeed the drumming of Buddy Gilmore, often called "the first jazz drummer," was key to the rhythmic vitality

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<sup>162</sup> [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFG4Ejf\\_C\\_c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFG4Ejf_C_c)

<sup>163</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gftl8zClfUQ>

<sup>164</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 272.

<sup>165</sup> This can be heard in the wind band drumming feature, *The Ragtime Drummer*, by James Lent, an excellent example of this style drumming. (Youtube recording: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUPQGsfxB28>) A sample of score and parts, arranged by William Kahn are available at <http://www.honeyrock.net/sc-sd/Ragtime1.htm>.

of these recordings.<sup>166</sup> Heavily punctuated crashes on a large Chinese-style cymbal fill the stop-time spaces in the introduction and repeats of the A section of the first strain. Piano is very discernable throughout the recording, certainly the result of using two piano players on the session. A combination of the two-handed accompaniment pattern and doubling the melody and principle background lines are clearly heard. Likely the baritone horn was used to support the cello part; it is discernable as a wind instrument, but not always identifiable.

*Castle House Rag*<sup>167</sup>, named for the Castle's Manhattan dance school, was originally titled *The Castles in Europe*, that title later assigned to a different Europe composition. Tempo indication from the sheet music is "Allegro moderato," which for the recording was interpreted at about 120 beats to the half note in alla breve meter. The Victor recording technicians achieve the same general balance as *Castle Walk*, with violins and drums dominant, and piano and baritone detectable. Orchestra bells are incorporated in the trio strain in call-and-response effect, filling in the spaces in stop-time melody which had originally been included to hear the dancer's steps. No real attempt was made to incorporate different dynamic levels on the recording, except where eliminating or adding instrumental timbres created more or less general volume. The published version includes a "break-up strain" interlude between repeats of the trio strain; the recording simply repeats the strain, and then proceeds to a 64-measure coda strain. The coda is comprised of a 48-measure strain (abb), featuring a melody of running eighth in syncopated diatonic arpeggios, and very active snare drumming supporting the

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<sup>166</sup> Schuller, *Early Jazz*, 183.

<sup>167</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu16WTdT3hQ>

rhythmic pattern and syncopated accents. It ends in a 16-measure codetta based on the cliché “shave-and-a-haircut” riff featuring a stop-time snare drum solo to close the song out.

*Congratulations Waltz* was originally titled *Castle’s Lane Duck*<sup>168</sup> Studio ledgers indicate the title changes to this and *Castle House Rag* were both made on the spot, likely at the recommendation of the Castles.<sup>169</sup> In the recording, Europe does not use the slow, Strauss-like introduction, transition into the final A section, or codetta found in the published arrangement. The direct and unadorned form (AABBACCA), without the tempo changes and transitions indicates to the author a recording made specifically for dancing. The steady tempo also appears to make this an ideal instructional recording.<sup>170</sup> Europe takes the tempo at 66 beats for the dotted half note in three-four meter. In the A strain the reeds are clearly discernable, particularly the clarinet obbligato. There is also a greater sense of transparency in the B strain, especially when compared to the other recorded selections. Much of this is due to the absence of drumming, which was recorded more prominently in the brisker tempo syncopated numbers.

The April 1914 release of the selections from the second Victor session was a part of a larger promotional announcement of the Castle’s marketing contract with Victor. Victor’s April 1914 catalog supplement included a photo of the Castles, a brochure with Vernon and Irene demonstrating dance steps, and a letter written on Castle stationary in which Vernon proudly announces:

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<sup>168</sup> [http://victor.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/200014714/C-14435-Castles\\_lane\\_duck](http://victor.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/200014714/C-14435-Castles_lane_duck)

<sup>169</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 272.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

Mrs. Castle and I, after a thorough trial of other sound reproducing instruments, have decided to use the Victor and Victor Records exclusively at Castle House....I also take great pleasure in announcing that I have given to the Victor Company the exclusive services of the Castle House Orchestra for the making of dance records, and also that I will personally superintend the making of Victor Dance Records.<sup>171</sup>

The all-white Castle House Orchestra, conducted by Frank W. McKee, had actually recorded dance selections for Victor on February 13, 1914. The sessions produced six dance selections, comprised of waltzes, tangos, and a maxixe. The small dance orchestra was comprised of two violins, cello, piano, flute, clarinet, and cornet. The impression the author has is that, much like Europe and his orchestra, McKee's orchestra was contracted by the Castles to play at Castle House, and simply took on the name Castle House Orchestra for the Victor sessions. And because McKee never recorded for the Castles again, the notoriety gained by recording for Vernon and Irene might have given him the professional exposure he needed to record under his own name. Victor's ledgers for July 27, 1914 state that "Castle House Orchestra ... in future to be indexed under McKee's Orchestra."<sup>172</sup> McKee recorded thirteen more times between July 1914 and May 1917, all under "McKee's Orchestra" or "McKee Trio." McKee recorded one of his own compositions on the Castle House Orchestra session, a waltz entitled *Cecile*. The title appeared in advertising copy for publisher Ricordi, right along with Europe's *Congratulations Waltz*.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> "Castle House Orchestra (musical group)." *Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings*.[http://victor.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/talent/detail/3356/Castle\\_House\\_Orchestra\\_Musical\\_group](http://victor.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/talent/detail/3356/Castle_House_Orchestra_Musical_group) (Accessed March 15, 2013)

<sup>173</sup> *Jacob's Orchestra Monthly* 6, no. 1 (January 1915), 8.



### THIRD VICTOR SESSION

Europe's Society Orchestra

October 1, 1914

Victor Studios, New York

Leader:	James Reese Europe
Flute:	Fred Covite
Clarinet:	Edgar Campbell or John Russell
Cornet:	Cricket Smith
Baritone:	George De Leon
Piano:	Leonard Smith or Ford Dabney (only one piano used on this session)
Drums:	Buddy Gilmore or George Jenkins
Violins:	Tracy Cooper, George Smith, Walter Scott, Allie Ross, James van Hooten, William Tyler, or William Parquette
Cello:	Chandler Ford or Leonard Jeter
Bass:	George Heyward

Victor released neither of the two selections recorded on that session, *Fiora Waltz* by Europe, and *Fox Trot* by an unidentified composer. No indication for their rejection is indicated.

In addition to the Victor recording sessions, Europe and Ford Dabney produced piano rolls for Welte-Mignon Company of Poughkeepsie, NY in April 1914.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Brooks, *Lost Sounds*, 274.

Europe would not record again until after his World War I service, when he would take his now-legendary “Hellfighters” Band into the studio in March and May of 1919 to record 24 selections. This time, Europe would not need the imprimatur of Vernon and Irene Castle to get into the recording studio, or the implied supervision of whites to certify his work.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE DANCES

Social dancing in the 1910's through 1920's was built on five basic dances: the one-step; the Argentine tango; the Brazilian maxixe, or Brazilian tango; and the fox trot. The dancing public demanded new dances that were reasonably simple to learn and execute. It fell on the exhibition dancers, as the principle trendsetters and teachers of social dancing, to develop and create these new dances. Because the dancing public was already acquainted with the five basic dances, exhibition dancers tended to create their own proprietary versions of these dances and taught simplified versions for the public. In order to remain viable in a crowded and competitive market, the Castle's were able to increase their impact by presenting their new dances accompanied by new music composed by James Reese Europe, the leading name in syncopated dance music.

In this chapter, the five basic dances of the Europe/Castle era are presented, along with the proprietary variations and original dance creations performed by the Castle's. Where a Castle proprietary version exists, it will be mentioned, accompanied by Vernon Castle instructional descriptions from *Modern Dancing*, as applicable.

#### ONE-STEP

The basic dance step of the time, the one-step is a series of smooth walking steps, one per beat of music. In effect, dancing the one-step is no more than couples walking in time to music. This was the dance that opened up social dancing to everyone, since it required no particularly special skills or talents. Music was usually in two-four meter. To

perform the one-step; the couple faces one another, the gentleman taking the lady's right hand in his left, the gentleman's right hand held gently in the center of the lady's back, and her left hand on his right shoulder. The gentleman steps out forward on his left foot, the lady steps backward on her right. The basic one-step could be elaborated with a variety of fixed patterns, spins, et cetera, all done in tempo, without breaking the walking pattern.

Vernon Castle's instructions from *Modern Dancing*:

The One Step is the dance for ragtime music.<sup>175</sup>

Bear in mind this one important point: When I say *walk*, that is all it is. Do not shuffle, do not bob up and down or trot. Simply *walk* as softly and smoothly as possible, taking a step to every count of the music. This is the One Step, and this is all there is to it.<sup>176</sup>

#### THE WALK

The walk is similar to the one-step, in that it was danced one step per beat of music. The main difference was the "strutting" character of the walk, achieved by maintaining straightened knees and rising slightly on the balls of the feet. The walk was danced in circular pattern around perimeter of dance floor, and dancing in increasingly smaller circles. When the couple completed the route and found themselves dancing in one spot, they would begin the large circle again. Vernon Castle from his instructions:

First of all, walk as I have already explained in the One Step. Now, raise yourself up slightly on your toes at each step, with the legs a trifle stiff, and breeze along happily and easily, and you know all there is to know about the Castle Walk...It sounds silly and is silly. That is the explanation of its popularity!<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Vernon and Irene Castle, *Modern Dancing*, 43.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 44.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 47.

## THE FOX TROT

There had been several dances from the “animal dance” period to use the name fox trot. The version that Vernon Castle developed came from the Whirlwind Tour, when Europe presented him W.C. Handy’s *Memphis Blues* as a possible dance tune. After some initial reluctance, Vernon did put a dance together, which included some “old ‘Negro’ steps he had picked up from various sources.”<sup>178</sup> Originally called the “Fish Walk,” and demonstrated at society engagements, the fox trot was an immediate success.

The fox trot combines one-step with the two-step, a dance popularized in the late nineteenth century, performed famously to John Philip Sousa’s march *The Washington Post*. It is danced to a moderate tempo in four-four meter, somewhat slower than a one-step or walk. The basic dance is comprised of two slow steps (one step per two beats of music), followed by three quick steps (one step per beat of music), followed by a hold of one beat. A characteristic feature of the fox trot is a box-shaped floor pattern that is produced by combination of forward and lateral travel. The fox trot would endure the dance craze to become the foundation of ballroom and social dancing. Because the fox trot was developed after the publication of *Modern Dancing*, Castle provided no written instructions.

## THE HESITATION WALTZ

The hesitation waltz developed from slower-tempo waltzes of the late nineteenth. It is the traditional three-step waltz set to syncopated music. The effect of syncopation was to slur beats two and three, and beats five and six of a two-measure pattern. Dancers could improvise or add additional steps at the hesitation sequence. The Castle’s

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<sup>178</sup> Benjamin, “James Reese Europe: Music and Culture,” xi.

proprietary hesitation waltz was branded “Castle’s *Lame Duck*,” “the *dernier cri* in waltz steps,” according to Vernon.<sup>179</sup>

...the gentleman, as usual, starts forward on his left foot and does a half-sliding dip and half limp for two counts; then the right foot comes to his relief for just one count, and in this way he, as it were, shuffles forward, the right knee straightening more or less and the left knee remaining bent. The lady’s part is naturally just the opposite...One last word about the *Lame Duck*. If you do it smoothly it is pleasing to the onlookers and to yourself; if you exaggerate it you lose all the *Duck* and it is simply *Lame*.<sup>180</sup>

## THE TANGO

The tango developed as a combination of the African-Latin tangano dance, and the Cuban habanera rhythm. This turn-of-the-century Argentine couples dance came to the United States via Paris in early 1910’s. The defining characteristic of tango is a pattern of alternating movement and rest. The basic tango movement is called “cortez,” which is a five-step sequence (slow-slow-quick-quick-slow). Complete tangos incorporated additional sequences, which included media luna, scissors, promenade, and eight-step.

In a 1914 interview with the *New York Tribune*, James Reese Europe insists the tango actually originated as African American dances. Europe claims that one of his musicians, one William Tyers, composed the first tango in America in the 1890s. These two tangos, “The Trocha” and “The Maori,” were, according to Europe, “Negro dances, played and danced by Negroes alone,” and only lately adopted by white Americans.<sup>181</sup>

Vernon Castle wrote regarding the tango:

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid, 78.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 79-80.

<sup>181</sup> Benjamin. “James Reese Europe: Music and Culture,” ix.

The Argentine Tango is unquestionably the most difficult of the new dances...More difficult than the old-fashioned Two Step, yes. Certainly more difficult than the One Step. But once you get into the swing and rhythm of music more alluring than a Viennese Waltz-well, you are lost. You have become a Tango enthusiast ...

The most important thing about the Tango is its tempo. You must, before you can dance at all, understand and appreciate the music, and the best way to learn this is to walk...in time to it. By doing this you impress upon yourself that it is a *slow* dance, and that it should be simple, and not full of jerky and complicated steps.<sup>182</sup>

#### THE MAXIXE

Also known as the Brazilian tango, the maxixe combines steps and techniques tango and two-step. Its distinguishing feature is a heel step. The maxixe tended to be too difficult for the general dance public, due to rapidly executed step changes. Vernon describes the maxixe as,

...beautiful, and, like most beautiful dance, requires a considerable amount of grace. The steps themselves are not difficult; on the contrary, they are childishly simple; it is the easiest dance of all to do, and I think the hardest of all to do well.<sup>183</sup>

Castle takes one or two pages of text to describe most of these dances; he takes ten to explain the “childishly simple” Maxixe.

#### THE INNOVATION

Innovation is a tango or waltz performed without the partners holding hands. In exhibition dancing, an innovation was often performed with hand held props.

Vernon Castle on the innovation:

This is naturally very difficult, and can only be done by good dancers.  
...the man must learn to lead with his whole body; by this I mean he

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 84-86.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 107-108

must convey his steps and direction to his partner by means of head, eyes, and feet. The lady should not look at the man's feet in the Innovation, but rather try to get a general view of her partner, so that she may see what he is doing without actually scrutinizing the steps. The hands may be either kept behind your back, on your hips, or in your pocket; look at yourself in a mirror and decide which position suits you best.<sup>184</sup>

#### THE HALF AND HALF

The half and half was a Castle signature creation. It was danced to music in five-four meter (a measure of two and a measure of three).

The ordinary position is assumed, the gentleman holding his partner a little farther away from him than in the Waltz; and on the first three counts you take one long, slow step, and on the next two you take two steps...The lady does the same step on the opposite foot. This is the Half and Half, and when done smoothly looks something between the Tango, Lame Duck, and Hesitation. It is a very quiet and beautiful dance, and I hope it will become popular.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 103-104.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 130, 133.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY**

A wealth of scholarship already exists on James Reese Europe and Vernon and Irene Castle. And while ensembles like the Paragon Ragtime Orchestra and the New England Ragtime Ensemble have released recordings featuring a few of the Europe/Castle selections (see Appendix B for details), there has not been an effort to present the eleven dance selections as a single body of work. The author recommends creating new editions of all of the published stock arrangements and writing new arrangements of those that not arranged in 1914/1915, utilizing the same arranging and scoring techniques as Carl Williams and Louis von der Mehden and scoring them for contemporary wind band instrumentation. Rags and syncopated dance music were significant to the popular repertoire of American wind bands, amateur and professional alike, and so constitute a small but significant piece of the idiomatic heritage. Additionally, while James Reese Europe the musical director, wartime military bandmaster, and pioneering advocate for African American music and musicians has been enshrined in the pantheon of American artists, Europe the composer of popular song and dance music is all but ignored. A collection of the Europe/Castle selections for wind band would certainly take a step toward keeping Europe's memory and his musical legacy alive.

The connection between this dance music and the dances for which they were written is certainly mentioned in writing on Europe and the Castles, and in writing and scholarship on the music, dance, and social issues of the first two decades of the twentieth century. Writing and scholarship on the arts, however, are only able to explain that which performance demonstrates. A vital part of this particular study was a lecture recital featuring an orchestra performing five of the Europe/Castle compositions, accompanying dancers recreating the Dances that the Castles would have performed to this music. Creating this sort of living document gave the author, as a scholar/performer, a truer sense of the music and the music/dance connection, than any amount of research or score study. Working with dancers requires musicians to take tempos that accommodate the dance, resulting in what may be the most accurate sense we have of how this music was intended to sound and move. And such interdisciplinary projects create and maintain collegial connections among artists that are often infrequent. The author recommends a performance presentation of all eleven Europe/Castle dance compositions, with the corresponding dances, and with costumed actors or narrators providing dialog from the contemporaneous writings of Europe and the Castles, and from the newspapers, publications, and criticism of the era.

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## **APPENDIX A – CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

1913

August

Europe and the Castle's first meeting at August 22 Newport party; considered the beginning of their collaboration.

December:

Opening of Castle House dance school on East 46<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan, (12/15).

Opening of Sans Souci, the Castle's Times Square cabaret.

First Victor recording sessions with Europe's Society Orchestra (12/29)

1914

January

Europe resigns Clef Club presidency (1/1); announces new organization, Tempo Club (1/4)

Castle's contracted to appear on vaudeville stage at Palace and Victoria Theaters; demand Europe's Society Orchestra appear, in spite of ban by musician's unions against black musicians in the pits. First racially mixed performances on Broadway.

February

Second Victor recording sessions (2/10)

March

Europe's National Negro Symphony performs benefit concert for Harlem Music School Settlement at Carnegie Hall (3/11)

Europe interviewed by NY Post

April/May

Victor recordings from February released.

Europe and Ford Dabney produce piano rolls for Welte-Mignon Company of Poughkeepsie, NY.

“A Night in Tangoland,” sponsored by Tempo Club, featuring National Negro Orchestra, with special guests Vernon and Irene Castle, at Manhattan Casino. (4/8)

The Whirlwind Tour (4/27 – 5/23)

August

World War I begins (8/1)

October

Third Victor recording session.

November

Formerly segregated Local 310, American Federation of Musicians, votes to admit black members. Europe joins, and is credited with helping create the change.

Europe interviewed for NY Tribune.

December

Castle’s open in *Watch Your Step* at New Amsterdam Theater; in spite of Castle’s insistence, Europe was not hired to accompany them. (12/8)

1915

April

Castle’s dance to Europe’s music at Tempo Club event; their final appearance together. (4/22)

Summer

*The Whirl of Life* filmed; released in October and November.



## APPENDIX B – DISCOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY/PIANO ROLLOGRAPHY

TABLE B.1 SELECTIONS FROM FEBRUARY 1914 RECORDINGS

Selection	Matrix Number	Label/ Issue Number	*Reissue	U.S. Library Holding
<i>Congratulations Waltz</i>	14433-3	RCA Victor: 35372-A	None	Yale University
<i>Castle House Rag</i>	14434-3	RCA Victor: 17553-1	1,2,3	Yale University, Stanford University
<i>Castle Walk</i>	14434-2	RCA Victor: 17553-1; His Master's Voice: B258	1,2,3	Yale University

**\*Reissues:**

1. *Steppin' on the Gas*. New World 260
2. *Ragtime Volume 2: Cakewalks, etc. (1900-1921)*. RCA PM 42402 (France)
3. *Ragtime, Cakewalks & Stomps, vol.4: "Rusty Rags" (1900-1917)*. Saydisc 253 (Britain)

### OTHER RECORDINGS OF EUROPE/CASTLE SELECTIONS

"The Art of the Rag," New England Ragtime Ensemble, directed by Gunther Schuller.  
GM Records, GM3018CD. Compact Disc.

*Castle House Rag*, arr. Schuller

*Castle Walk*, arr. Schuller

"Black Manhattan: Theater and Dance Music of James Reese Europe, Will Marion Cook, and Members of the Legendary Clef Club." The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra, directed by Rick Benjamin.

New World Records, 80611-2. Compact Disc.

*The Castle Perfect Trot*

*Castle House Rag*

*Congratulations* ("the Castles' Lame Duck Waltz")

TABLE B.2 RECORDINGS OF *CASTLE HOUSE RAG*

Performer	Record Company/Number	Date
T. J. Anderson Orchestra	Smithsonian 001	1975
Black Music Repertory Ensemble	CBMR 001	1989
Budapest Ragtime Orchestra	Krem SLPX-17794	1984
Paul Hersh and David Montgomery	RCA Victor ARL1-0364	1974
Knocky Parker and Bill Coffman	Jazzology JCE-82	c.1979
Phoenix Ragtime Ensemble	World Jazz 12	June 1977
Wally Rose	Columba CL-6260	May 1955
Roger Shields	Turnabout 34579	1974
South Frisco Jazz Band	Alpha 2002	1981

TABLE B. 3 PIANO ROLLOGRAPHY

Selection	Company/Number	Performer	Collection
<i>Castle Doggie</i>	Herwin 407		
	Melo-Art 91668		
	Metrostyle-Themodist 302038		
	Universal 302039	Steve Williams	
<i>Castle House Rag</i>	Artempo 836		
	Electra 80614 (m)		"Castle's Modern Dances"
	Kimball C-6628		
	Pianostyle 35651 (m)		"Castle Fox Trot Medley"
	QRS 31544		
	QRS 31637 (m)		"All Seasons Medley"
	Rhythmodik B-8873	Oscar Lifshey	
	US Music 66448		

## VIDEOGRAPHY

*Mr. and Mrs. Castle before the Camera.* Produced by Mortimer Henry Singer. 1914.

Movie cameras filmed Vernon and Irene demonstrating half a dozen or so of their steps before a small audience at Castle House. This short film was released as part of a media-marketing blitz intended to take full advantage of the Castle's new popularity. The film was quite successful, earning \$35,000 a week for the vaudeville theater exhibitors.

*The Whirl of Life*. Directed by Oliver Bailey. Cort Film Company, 1915.

This is a silent film melodrama, starring Vernon and Irene Castle, and based very loosely around their life and career. The cast included several professional actors, but also featured Europe drummer Buddy Gilmore, the Castle's domestic Walter Ash, Vernon's dog Tell, and Irene's pet monkey. A young Ruth Gordon reportedly made her motion picture debut in this film as an extra, although she is not identifiable. Europe appears uncredited as himself, leading his band in several scenes. It was filmed on location in and around the Castle's Long Island home. *The Whirl of Life* was released irregularly between October and November 1915 to generally positive reviews. The New York Museum of Modern Art holds a copy of the film.

*The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle*. Directed by H.C. Potter. RKO, 1939.

In 1937, RKO producer Pandro Berman signed a contract with Irene Castle to make a motion picture biography of the Castle's life and dance career. Irene was credited as "costume designer, technical advisor, and writer." The film starred Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. The African Americans who played such a significant personal and professional role in the Castle's life and professional success were eliminated from the story. White actor Walter Brennen played the part of Walter Ash, Vernon and Irene's black domestic servant. James Reese Europe, Ford Dabney, Buddy Gilmore, and the African American musicians who created the syncopated dance music that was so critical to Vernon and Irene's dancing were eliminated from the movie. None of Europe's music was used for the motion picture's soundtrack.

## **APPENDIX C – FIRST PAGES OF EUROPE/CASTLE COMPOSITIONS**

# CASTLE HOUSE RAG.

TROT and ONE STEP.

JAMES REESE EUROPE.

*Allegro moderato.*

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems. The first system begins with a forte (f) dynamic and the tempo marking 'Allegro moderato.' The music is in 2/4 time. The second system is marked mezzo-forte (mf). The third and fourth systems continue the piece with various rhythmic patterns. The fifth system concludes with first and second endings, marked with '1' and '2' respectively.

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Musical examples drawn from "The Music of James Reese Europe - Complete Published Works." Edward B. Marks Music Company, 2012. Used by permission.

# The Castle Walk.

TROT and ONE STEP.

by JAMES REESE EUROPE  
and FORD T. DABNEY.

*Con spirito.*

The musical score is written for piano and bass. It begins with a treble clef and a bass clef, both in 2/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score consists of five systems of two staves each. The first system starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system includes a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the fifth system.

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Castles in Europe  
The Innovation Trot.

JAMES REESE EUROPE

Moderato

*mf*

*mf*

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# CASTLE MAXIXE

BRAZILIAN MAXIXE

JAMES REESE EUROPE

and

FORD. T. DABNEY

Moderato

Copyright MCMXIV by Jos. W. Stern & Co.



# Castle Perfect Trot

(ONE STEP)

By JAMES REESE EUROPE  
and  
FORD. T. DABNEY

Tempo di Trot.

The musical score is written for piano in 2/4 time. It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The first system begins with a treble staff melody and a bass staff accompaniment. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system features a treble staff melody with a 'fz' (forzando) marking and a bass staff accompaniment. The fourth system continues the melody and accompaniment. The fifth system concludes the piece with a treble staff melody and a bass staff accompaniment, ending with a double bar line.

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# Castle Innovation Tango

Argentine Tango

JAMES REESE EUROPE  
and  
FORD T. DABNEY

Tempo di Tango

mp

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# CASTLES' HALF AND HALF

By  
JAMES REESE EUROPE  
&  
FORD T. DABNEY

Moderato.

Piano

*f*

*dim.*

*mp*

*R. H.*

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# Castle Lane Duck

## WALTZ

By  
JAMES REESE EUROPE  
& FORD T. DABNEY

### INTRODUCTION

Moderato con espressione

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time. It begins with an introduction marked 'Moderato con espressione' and 'mp'. The introduction consists of two staves of music. The first staff features a melody with a trill on the first measure, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern. The introduction concludes with a double bar line. Following the introduction is a section labeled 'Valse', also marked 'mp'. This section continues the melodic and harmonic themes, with the melody featuring more trills and the accompaniment maintaining a consistent rhythmic pattern. The valse section ends with a final cadence.

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# THE CASTLE DOGGY

Fox Trot

FORD T. DABNEY

JAMES REESE EUROPE  
arr. by J. Louis von der Mehden, Jr.

Moderato

Piano

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. The first system begins with a treble and bass clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Moderato'. The first measure of the treble staff is marked with a forte dynamic (ff). The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system features a 'p' (piano) dynamic and a 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking. The fourth system returns to a 'mf-f' (mezzo-forte to forte) dynamic. The fifth system concludes the piece with two endings, labeled '1' and '2', which lead to a final cadence.

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# CONGRATULATIONS

Listed by Victor Talking Machine Co.  
as

CASTLE'S LAME DUCK WALTZ. JAMES REESE EUROPE

Arr. by J. Louis von der Mehden, Jr.

INTRODUCTION  
Moderato con moto

Piano

1. Tempo di valse con spirito

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# Castle Combination

Waltz-Trot

By JAMES REESE EUROPE

And

FORD T. DABNEY.

Tempo di Trot.

The musical score is written for piano in 2/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The first system begins with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'Tempo di Trot.' marking. The melody in the treble staff is characterized by eighth-note patterns and triplet figures. The bass staff provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes. The second system continues the melodic development with more complex rhythmic patterns. The third system features a series of chords in the treble staff, suggesting a harmonic progression. The fourth system concludes the piece with a final cadence in both staves.

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## **APPENDIX D – CRITICAL EDITION OF CASTLE HOUSE RAG**



## Score

## Castle House Rag

Trot &amp; One Step

James Reese Europe

Arranged by Tom Clark

Edited by Ralph G. Barrett

Piccolo/Flute *f* *sf* *mf*

Oboe *f* *sf* *mf*

Bassoon *f* *sf* *mf*

Clarinet in E♭ *f* *sf* *mf*

Clarinet in B♭-1 *f* *sf* *mf*

Clarinet in B♭-2 *f* *sf* *mf*

Clarinet in B♭-3 *f* *sf* *mf*

Bass Clarinet *f* *sf* *mf*

Soprano Sax *f* *sf* *mf*

Alto Sax *f* *sf* *mf*

Tenor Sax *f* *sf* *mf*

Baritone Sax *f* *sf* *mf*

Trumpet in B♭-1 *f* *sf* *mf*

Trumpet in B♭-2 *f* *sf* *mf*

Trumpet in B♭-3 *f* *sf* *mf*

Horn in F 1 *f* *sf* *mf*

Horn in F 2 *f* *sf* *mf*

Horn in F 3 *f* *sf* *mf*

Horn in F 4 *f* *sf* *mf*

Trombone 1 *f* *sf* *mf*

Trombone 2 *f* *sf* *mf*

Trombone 3 *f* *sf* *mf*

Euphonium *f* *sf* *mf*

Tuba *f* *sf* *mf*

Cymbals *f* *sf* *mf*

Woodblock *mf*

Bells *f* *mf*

Snare Drum *f* *sf* *mf*

Bass Drum *f* *sf* *mf*

Picc./Flt.  
 Ob.  
 Bsn.  
 E♭ Cl.  
 B♭ Cl. 1  
 B♭ Cl. 2  
 B♭ Cl. 3  
 B. Cl.  
 S. Sax.  
 A. Sax.  
 T. Sax.  
 B. Sax.  
 B♭ Tpt. 1  
 B♭ Tpt. 2  
 B♭ Tpt. 3  
 Hrn. 1  
 Hrn. 2  
 Hrn. 3  
 Hrn. 4  
 Tbn. 1  
 Tbn. 2  
 Tbn. 3  
 Euph.  
 Tuba  
 Cym.  
 Bbs.  
 S. Dr.  
 B. Dr.

Musical score for "Castle House Rag". The score is written for a large ensemble, including woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The key signature is one flat (B♭), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *sf* (sforzando). A rehearsal mark [11] is present in the Piccolo/Flute part. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple notes and rests.

# Castle House Rag

3

Picc./Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

E♭ Cl.

B♭ Cl. 1

B♭ Cl. 2

B♭ Cl. 3

B. Cl.

S. Sax.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

B♭ Tpt. 3

Hrn. 1

Hrn. 2

Hrn. 3

Hrn. 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tuba

Cym.

Bls.

S. Dr.

B. Dr.

The musical score is written for a large ensemble. The key signature has one flat (B♭), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple notes and rests. The instruments are listed on the left side of the page, and their corresponding staves are arranged vertically. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., *f*, *sf*, *sfz*). The percussion section includes Cymbals, Bells, Snare Drum, and Bass Drum.

## Castle House Rag

Picc./Flt. *ff*  
 Ob. *ff*  
 Bsn. *ff*  
 E♭ Cl. *ff*  
 B♭ Cl. 1 *ff*  
 B♭ Cl. 2 *ff*  
 B♭ Cl. 3 *ff*  
 B. Cl. *ff*  
 S. Sax. *ff*  
 A. Sax. *ff*  
 T. Sax. *ff*  
 B. Sax. *ff*  
 B♭ Tpt. 1 *ff*  
 B♭ Tpt. 2 *ff*  
 B♭ Tpt. 3 *ff*  
 Hrn. 1 *ff*  
 Hrn. 2 *ff*  
 Hrn. 3 *ff*  
 Hrn. 4 *ff*  
 Tbn. 1 *ff*  
 Tbn. 2 *ff*  
 Tbn. 3 *ff*  
 Euph. *ff*  
 Tuba *ff*  
 Cym. *ff*  
 Bls.  
 S. Dr.  
 B. Dr.

# Castle House Rag

5

Picc./Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

E♭ Cl.

B♭ Cl. 1

B♭ Cl. 2

B♭ Cl. 3

B. Cl.

S. Sax.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

B♭ Tpt. 3

Hrn. 1

Hrn. 2

Hrn. 3

Hrn. 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tuba

Cym.

Bls.

S. Dr.

B. Dr.

The musical score is written for a large ensemble. The key signature has one flat (B♭) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into systems, with each instrument or section having its own staff. The instruments listed are: Piccolo/Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, E♭ Clarinet, B♭ Clarinet 1, B♭ Clarinet 2, B♭ Clarinet 3, Baritone Clarinet, Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, B♭ Trumpet 1, B♭ Trumpet 2, B♭ Trumpet 3, Horn 1, Horn 2, Horn 3, Horn 4, Tenorbone 1, Tenorbone 2, Tenorbone 3, Euphonium, Tuba, Cymbal, Bell, Snare Drum, and Bass Drum. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Picc./Fl.  
 Ob.  
 Bsn.  
 E♭ Cl.  
 B♭ Cl. 1  
 B♭ Cl. 2  
 B♭ Cl. 3  
 B. Cl.  
 S. Sax.  
 A. Sax.  
 T. Sax.  
 B. Sax.  
 B♭ Tpt. 1  
 B♭ Tpt. 2  
 B♭ Tpt. 3  
 Hrn. 1  
 Hrn. 2  
 Hrn. 3  
 Hrn. 4  
 Tbn. 1  
 Tbn. 2  
 Tbn. 3  
 Euph.  
 Tuba  
 Cym.  
 Bls.  
 S. Dr.  
 B. Dr.

The musical score is for a piece titled "Castle House Rag". It is written for a large band. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes parts for the following instruments: Piccolo/Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, E♭ Clarinet, B♭ Clarinet 1, B♭ Clarinet 2, B♭ Clarinet 3, Baritone Clarinet, Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, B♭ Trumpet 1, B♭ Trumpet 2, B♭ Trumpet 3, Horn 1, Horn 2, Horn 3, Horn 4, Tenorbone 1, Tenorbone 2, Tenorbone 3, Euphonium, Tuba, Cymbal, Bells, Snare Drum, and Bass Drum. The score is divided into measures, with a rehearsal mark [60] appearing at the beginning of the 60th measure. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

# Castle House Rag

7

Picc./Flt.  
 Ob.  
 Bsn.  
 E♭ Cl.  
 B♭ Cl. 1  
 B♭ Cl. 2  
 B♭ Cl. 3  
 B. Cl.  
 S. Sax.  
 A. Sax.  
 T. Sax.  
 B. Sax.  
 B♭ Tpt. 1  
 B♭ Tpt. 2  
 B♭ Tpt. 3  
 Hrn. 1  
 Hrn. 2  
 Hrn. 3  
 Hrn. 4  
 Tbn. 1  
 Tbn. 2  
 Tbn. 3  
 Euph.  
 Tuba  
 Cym.  
 Bls.  
 S. Dr.  
 B. Dr.

Musical score for "Castle House Rag" featuring a large ensemble of instruments including Piccolo/Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, various Clarinets, Saxophones, Trumpets, Horns, Tubas, and Drums. The score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It includes dynamic markings like *f* and *ff*.

Picc./Flt. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Ob. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Bsn. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 E♭ Cl. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B♭ Cl. 1 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B♭ Cl. 2 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B♭ Cl. 3 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B. Cl. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 S. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 A. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 T. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B♭ Tpt. 1 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B♭ Tpt. 2 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B♭ Tpt. 3 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Hrn. 1 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Hrn. 2 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Hrn. 3 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Hrn. 4 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Tbn. 1 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Tbn. 2 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Tbn. 3 *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Euph. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Tuba *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Cym. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 Bells *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 S. Dr. *f* *f* *f* *mf*  
 B. Dr. *f* *f* *f* *mf*



# Castle House Rag

9

105

Picc./Fl. *mf* *ff*

Ob. *mf* *ff*

Bsn. *mf* *ff*

E♭ Cl. *mf* *ff*

B♭ Cl. 1 *mf* *ff*

B♭ Cl. 2 *mf* *ff*

B♭ Cl. 3 *mf* *ff*

B. Cl. *mf* *ff*

S. Sk. *mf* *ff*

A. Sk. *mf* *ff*

T. Sk. *mf* *ff*

B. Sk. *mf* *ff*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mf* *ff*

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mf* *ff*

B♭ Tpt. 3 *mf* *ff*

Hrn. 1 *mf* *ff*

Hrn. 2 *mf* *ff*

Hrn. 3 *mf* *ff*

Hrn. 4 *mf* *ff*

Tbn. 1 *mf* *ff*

Tbn. 2 *mf* *ff*

Tbn. 3 *mf* *ff*

Euph. *mf* *ff*

Tuba *mf* *ff*

Cym. *mf* *ff*

Bls. *mf* *ff*

S. Dr. *mf* *ff*

B. Dr. *mf* *ff*

Picc./Flt.  
 Ob.  
 Bsn.  
 E♭ Cl.  
 B♭ Cl. 1  
 B♭ Cl. 2  
 B♭ Cl. 3  
 B. Cl.  
 S. Sax.  
 A. Sax.  
 T. Sax.  
 B. Sax.  
 B♭ Tpt. 1  
 B♭ Tpt. 2  
 B♭ Tpt. 3  
 Hrn. 1  
 Hrn. 2  
 Hrn. 3  
 Hrn. 4  
 Tbn. 1  
 Tbn. 2  
 Tbn. 3  
 Euph.  
 Tuba  
 Cym.  
 Bbs.  
 S. Dr.  
 B. Dr.

Musical score for "Castle House Rag". The score is written for a large ensemble, including Piccolo/Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinets (E♭, B♭), Saxophones (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone), Trumpets (B♭), Horns, Trombones (B♭), Euphonium, Tuba, Cymbals, Basses, Snare Drums, and Bass Drums. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., *f*, *ff*, *sf*). A rehearsal mark [121] is present in the Piccolo/Flute part.

# Castle House Rag

11

129

The musical score for "Castle House Rag" is written for a large ensemble. The instruments listed on the left are: Picc./Flt., Ob., Bsn., E♭ Cl., B♭ Cl. 1, B♭ Cl. 2, B♭ Cl. 3, B. Cl., S. Sax., A. Sax., T. Sax., B. Sax., B♭ Tpt. 1, B♭ Tpt. 2, B♭ Tpt. 3, Hrn. 1, Hrn. 2, Hrn. 3, Hrn. 4, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Tbn. 3, Euph., Tuba, Cym., Bbs., S. Dr., and B. Dr. The score begins with a rehearsal mark at measure 129. The music is in 2/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests. Dynamics such as *ff* (fortissimo) are indicated throughout the score. The percussion section, including cymbals, snare drums, and bass drums, provides a steady rhythmic foundation.

12

Castle House Rag

122



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
School of Music

**RALPH G. BARRETT, conductor**  
in  
**DOCTORAL LECTURE RECITAL**

*“Modern Dancing:” The Music of James Reese Europe*

**Wednesday, February 27, 2013**  
**7:30 PM □ Recital Hall**

*Castle House Rag* James Reese Europe  
(Fox Trot and One-Step) (1881-1919)  
arr. C.F. Williams

*The Castle Walk* James Reese Europe & Ford Dabney  
(Trot and One-Step) arr. C.F. Williams

*Congratulations* James Reese Europe  
(Castle's Lame Duck Waltz) arr. J.L. von der Mehden

*The Castle Doggie-Fox Trot* James Reese Europe  
(Fox Trot) arr. J.L. von der Mehden

*Hey! There* James Reese Europe  
(One-Step March) arr. J.L. von der Mehden

*Castle Perfect Trot* James Reese Europe & Ford Dabney  
(One Trot) arr. C.F. Williams

Korinne Smith, *flute*; Peter Geldrich, *clarinet*;  
Bill Anonie, Jonathan Britt, *trumpet*; Brad Kessler, *trombone*;  
Cory Fica, *percussion*; Alan Rudell, *piano*;  
Shr-Han Wu, Emily Wait, *violin*; Sarah Steeves, *viola*;  
Ismail Akbar, *cello*; Austin Gaboriau, *contrabass*

***Recreating dances in the style of Vernon and Irene Castle,***  
**Richard Durlach and Kinsey Rhoad**

*Mr. Barrett is a student of Scott Weiss.*  
*This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the*  
*Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.*

RALPH G. BARRETT, conductor  
in  
GRADUATE COMPILATION RECITAL

---

USC Wind Ensemble, Monday, April 16, 2012, Koger Center for the Performing Arts

Conductor: Dr. Scott Weiss

Guest Conductors: Dr. Rebecca Phillips, Ralph Barrett, Adam Kehl

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik für Blasorchester	Kurt Weill (1900-1950)	25"
1. Ouverture		
2. Die Moritat von Mackie Messer		
3. Anstatt daß-Song		
4. Die Ballade vom angenehmen Leben		
5. Polly's Leid		
5a. Tango-Ballade		
6. Kanonen-Song		
7. Dreigroschen-Finale		

---

USC Wind Ensemble, Monday, September 24, 2012, Koger Center of the Performing Arts

Conductor: Dr. Scott Weiss

Guest Conductor: Ralph Barrett

Soloists: Dr. Clifford Leaman, alto saxophone; Maria Nyikos, horn; Arianna Beyer, clarinet

<i>Allegro Maestoso</i> from Horn Concerto No. 2 in E-flat Major, K. 417	Wolfgang A. Mozart/ arr. R. Rumbelow (1756-1791)	7'
<i>Alla Polacca</i> from Clarinet Concerto No. 2, Op.74	Carl Maria von Weber/arr. M. Rogers (1786-1826)	7'

---

USC University Band and Symphonic Winds, Monday, November 19, 2012,

Koger Center for the Performing Arts

Conductors: Jayme Taylor, Dr. Rebecca Phillips

Guest Conductor: Ralph Barrett

Themes from "Green Bushes"	Percy Aldridge Grainger/arr. L. Daehn (1882-1961)	4'
Peterloo Overture	Malcolm Arnold/arr. C. Sayre (1921-2006)	10'
Total:		53'

Mr. Barrett is a student of Scott Weiss. This recital is given in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.

RALPH G. BARRETT, conductor  
in  
GRADUATE REHEARSAL RECITAL  
Thursday, November 1, 2012  
2:00 p.m.  
Large Rehearsal Room, Koger Center

Peterloo Overture	Malcolm Arnold/arr. C. Sayre (1921-2006)	9'
Theme from "Green Bushes"	Percy Grainger/arr. L. Daehn (1882-1961)	5'
Symphony No. 2	Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)	22'
I.    Shooting Stars		
II.   Dreams Under a New Moon		
III.  Apollo Unleashed		
Elegy for a Young American	Ronald Lo Presti (b. 1933)	7'
Symphony No. 1 (In Memorial, Dresden, 1945)	Daniel Bukvich (b. 1954)	9'
I.    Prologue		
II.   Seeds in the Wind		
III.  Ave Maria		
IV.   Fire Storm		
Who Puts His Trust in God Most Just	J.S. Bach/arr. J. Croft (1685-1750)	6'
Gavorkna Fanfare	Jack Stamp (b. 1954)	2'
		_____
Total:		60'

Mr. Barrett is a student of Dr. Scott Weiss. This recital is given in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
School of Music

**RALPH G. BARRETT, conductor**  
in  
**DOCTORAL RECITAL**

**Thursday, April 25, 2013 □ 2:00 PM**  
**Koger Center - Large Rehearsal Room**

**University of South Carolina Wind Ensemble**

**Guest Artists:**

**Dr. Craig Kridel, serpent**

**E.S. Gambrell, Professor of Educational Studies and  
Curator of the Museum of Education, University of South Carolina**

March No. 1	Carl Andreas Goeppfert (1768-1818) ed. N. Glen
Divertimento No. 6 in F, Hob. II/44 March Spirito Adagio più Andante Minuetto moderato Scherzo	Attributed to Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) ed. D. Yeo
Serenade in D Minor, Op. 44 I. Moderato quasi Marcia II. Menuetto/Tempo di Menuetto III. Andante con moto IV. Finale/Allegro molto	Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904)
American Guernica	Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)
<i>Blessed Are They</i> from "A German Requiem"	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) arr. B. Buchlman
The Spirit of the U.S.N.	Alton Augustus Adams (1889-1987)

*Mr. Barrett is a student of Dr. Scott Weiss.  
This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting*